

THE PILGRIM

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NO. 1

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

DAY BY DAY AND WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT

Day by day and with each passing moment,
Strength I find to meet my trials here;
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,
I've no cause for worry or for fear.
He whose heart is kind beyond all measure
Gives unto each day what He deems best—
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure,
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

Every day the Lord Himself is near me
With a special mercy for each hour;
All my cares He fain would bear and cheer me,
He whose name is Counsellor and Power.
The protection of His child and treasure
Is a charge that on Himself He laid;
"As thy days, thy strength shall be in measure"
This the pledge to me He made.

Help me then in every tribulation
So to trust Thy promises, O Lord,
That I lose not faith's sweet consolation
Offered me within Thy holy word.
Help me Lord, when toil and trouble meeting,
E'er to take, as from a father's hand,
One by one, the days, the moments fleeting,
'Til I reach the promised land.

—Lina Sandell

Tr. by A. L. Skoog

THE FUTURE

It is not given to man to know his future. In God's wisdom He has denied this, and so we must conclude that it is not necessary. But we look ahead and sometimes think how thrilling it would be to know what is coming. 1986 stretches before us like unmarked sand on a beach. As we look back we see a well-traveled road, as all have passed through another year.

The prophets were given revelations regarding the future. How well they understood it, we do not know. But they spoke of events ahead and gave the people warnings accordingly. In Revelation (6:1 and repeatedly) John says "And I saw...and I heard..." He must have been given vision after vision regarding future events in heaven and on earth. Men are still trying to understand all that God showed John on Patmos.

With our children, we feel it is unnecessary to share our plans with them until they are old enough to understand. As they are able to comprehend and appreciate it, we show them our goals and our plans for future projects. The better they understand, the more we share with them and even ask their opinions.

Perhaps with God this principle would also apply. The ones closest to Him in the past, the ones who understood Him best, were the ones to whom He revealed the most. He called His special messengers "My servants the prophets." To them He revealed His plans for the future and intrusted His special messages. The prophets delivered them to the rest of the people.

Jeremiah 9:24 says, "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." This message from God

through Jeremiah certainly tells us that the important thing in God's sight is neither our wisdom, our might, nor our riches, but our understanding and knowledge of God. He wants us to know Him as exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness.

Have you ever had someone scoff at your plans or say you didn't know what you were talking about? It happens over and over, but occasionally the one who is ridiculed knows more than his scoffers. Galileo, in the early 1600's, was such a man. Hearing about a chance discovery of a telescope in Holland, he worked out the formulas for magnification with lenses and built a telescope himself. He was amazed at what he discovered. Everyone thought the earth was the center of the universe and that all heavenly bodies revolved around it. Galileo discovered that the earth and planets revolved around the sun. Try as he might, he could not convince the people of his time, and he was jailed and forced to deny the truth of his teachings and writings. He died, broken and disillusioned, and only later was the truth of his findings proven. His close friends believed him because they knew his character of honesty and his fine mind. It was those who had no knowledge of his subject, even the hierarchy of Rome, who condemned him.

With God we must know Him, trust His holy character, bow before His supreme intelligence and power, or else we will find ourselves not believing Him or His Holy Word.

The prophet Amos wrote (3:7), "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." God does reveal the future to men! The better we know Him, the more we will understand of His revealed will by the prophets in His Word.

We may not know all that will happen in 1986. But God has assured us of results according to the desires and intentions of our hearts. He says, "...Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal.6:7) And verse 9 tells us. "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint

not." Read the beatitudes of Jesus in Matthew 5. He promises us that if we are merciful (in 1986!) we shall obtain mercy; if we mourn, we shall be comforted; if we are pure in heart, we shall see God, etc.

And so it is not entirely true that man does not know his future as in our opening paragraph. We know much about God and about His plans. Study them carefully in His Word. May this be a resolution for this year, to study to know Him better. I John 5:20 reads, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." We may not know all that God will do in this coming year, but we know He does all things well and we, as children only partly comprehending His plans, can trust Him completely.

—L.C.

GOD'S GRACE

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."
(Titus 2:11-13)

In the beginning of Christ's ministry He said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Man was evidently created as an eternal being before death entered. But when man sinned, he fell. God did not want man to always live in this state. His love intervened. Man was driven from the garden, kept from the tree of life and made subject to time which has an end. Man again failed in disobeying God's covenant of law. But again God's love intervened. And Jesus came proclaiming that the time was fulfilled. God suspended His judgment and put an extension on time, which is called God's grace. Grace is God's love in action.

Creation today is alive because of God's grace. The purpose of God's grace is to restore man, and bring him back in God's favor and fellowship. In this time of grace God has revealed Himself more clearly than ever before, as He has become flesh and dwelt among us. He made atonement for sin, made a way that our sins might be forgiven, destroyed the power of death, and overcame evil with good. He gave us His Holy Spirit and revealed to us the way to eternal life. With many other infallible proofs he has left us without excuse to not know Him.

The grace of God or His mercy and extension of time, is a precious gift of God, because it is in this that we can learn to know God. Only when we avail ourselves of the purpose of God's grace will it save us. There is no magic in God's grace; it will not save us just because we know about it. So we can say with the apostle Paul, "We are saved by grace," because in this we learned to know Him.

As we look forward to another year (an extension of God's grace) may it be spent for the purpose for which it is given, that above all else we might learn to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.

Help us, oh Lord, that we might not receive the grace of God in vain!

—Kenneth Martin
Nappanee, Indiana

FAITH

Faith is a subject of vital importance, a matter of life or death, for "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek (to search out, investigate, crave, demand, worship, seek after carefully) him." (Heb. 11:6)

When we come to the Saviour in true repentance and brokenness, and truly feel our need of higher power,

then God will bestow fruit and gifts according to His will..." As God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom. 12:3) "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit..." (I Cor. 12:7-9)

Matthew Henry describes faith: "A definition of the grace of faith in two parts. It is the substance of things hoped for. Faith and hope go together; and the same things that are the object of our hope are the object of our faith. It is a firm persuasion and expectation that God will perform all that he has promised to us in Christ. Believers in the exercise of faith are filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is the evidence of things not seen. Faith demonstrates to the eye of the mind the reality of those things that cannot be discerned by the eye of the body. It is designed to serve the believer instead of sight, and to be to the soul all that the senses are to the body."

I was surprised that the word faith is only found in the Old Testament two times (Duet 32:20 and Hab. 2:4), but 243 times in the New Testament. Because of the fall of our foreparents in the garden, death by sin entered into the world, and passed upon all men. Yet there were heroes of faith in the olden times, as found in Hebrews 11 such as Abraham, who believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness," (Rom. 4:3) and David, who was a man after God's own heart. Here are a few beautiful words of David: "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." (Ps. 18:1-2)

The promise of a Redeemer and Saviour was given at the fall. The law was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. (Gal. 3:19) "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ

neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." (Gal. 5:5-6)

The Lord wants fellowship and holiness from His people. But before Jesus came, most of His people had gotten into a religious system and failed to recognize their Saviour. I wonder how much different it is today in professing Christianity. Can we say with Paul: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," or is self still on the throne of our lives?

JESUS, THE OBJECT OF OUR FAITH. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal.4:4-6) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth (trusts, clings to, relies on) in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) The Lord wants His children to come to Him with all their problems, with all their wants. There are many beautiful examples in the Gospels.

"And (Jesus) spake a parable unto them that men ought always to pray, and not to faint," and then told of the widow that came to the judge, and said, "Avenge me of mine adversary." And after she troubled him with her continual coming he said "Lest she weary me I will avenge her." "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:1-8) The Lord wants us to have faith in Him even when we can't see our way, and just rest in His wisdom and power. What a difference—to worry or to trust! Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift. What joy and peace is to be found by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ!

What a blessing came to the woman that had the issue of blood twelve years, "And had suffered many things

of many physicians and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." (Mark 5:25-34)

How often do we by faith come humbly before our Lord, when we have needs saying, "If I may but touch Jesus, I shall receive help"? There's a chorus to a song that I like, which goes like this:

"Jesus is here right now; reach out and touch Him.

Jesus is here right now; only believe.

Jesus is here right now, ready your heart to cheer.

Jesus is here right now; only believe."

"And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord, Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened..." (Matt. 9:27-30) What do we believe Jesus can do? Jesus said, "According to your faith be it unto you."

Jesus was hungry and, seeing a fig tree with leaves only, said, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever." "And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling

to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire; when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." (Mark 11:12-14 and 22-23)

What a promise! Is not this Scripture here for a purpose? Yes, we believe the Lord did not speak idle words. Jesus said, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them." But what do we desire? I wonder if this is not a key to the promise. If we follow the example of Jesus when He prayed, "Not my will but thine be done," we will be on the right course. James tells of one reason why men pray and receive not: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." (James 4:3) I once stumbled onto a prayer list someone had written. On it were things like this: a new home, a new car, a swimming pool, a large bank account, etc.

I fear we need to be careful to not follow the spirit of the world. Jesus is our example. He came to do the will of the Father, to seek and to save that which was lost. We see examples from the Lord, apostles, and early Church, of a suffering and persecuted body of believers which made remarks like this: "I count not my life dear unto me." "I count all things but dung that I may win Christ and be found in him..." Jesus said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." The things of the world should take second place in our hearts. The Lord wants us to come to Him in faith believing. Jesus and the apostles prayed much. Why? Because they were seeking their Heavenly Father's will.

Jesus said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide

in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." (John 15:7-8) Isn't it a thrill to ask and receive? Jesus said, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask and ye shall receive that your joy (happiness) may be full." (John 16:24)

James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering (doubting)." (James 1:5-6) This is plain talk, but do we have faith enough to practice it?

Also James says, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James 5:14-15) This Scripture says, "Is any sick among you?" It doesn't say it's only for the old, ready to pass on. I believe we miss a blessing if we fail to obey the inspired Word of God. Satan is busy and does all in his power to make us doubt to keep us powerless from God's will. He leads us into temptation and sin, that our fellowship is lost with the Almighty. He causes us to think the things of this world are so important—that heavenly things take second place. He causes friction and hatred among believers. "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:31,32)

The promise is to the overcomer: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

(I John 5:4) "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3:21)

Do we have any excuse if we fail? No, because our

risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has conquered Satan, and sin, and death, and we can be "more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom. 8:37)

Faith is the ingredient in our lives that we must have, or we will be powerless. Here is part of a song that has a beautiful thought:

Prayer is the key to heaven,
But faith unlocks the door.
Prayer without faith is like
A boat without an oar.

In Matthew 13:58 we read: "and he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." May we cry out with tears, as the man with the son who had a dumb spirit: "Lord I believe; help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9:24)

In Christian Love, Kenneth Garber
Twain Harte, California

SIDE BY SIDE

Father and son,
Father and son;
Side by side,
'Til day is done.

Machines to repair,
Livestock to tend;
Fields to plow,
Fences to mend.

Learning to work,
Rest and pray;
Learning to live
By God's way.

Father and son,
Father and son;
Side by side,
'Til life is done.

—Susan Harper
Nappanee, Indiana

HISTORICAL

HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES

Although there has been much dispute about this epistle in past ages, it has emerged as a part of God's Word most practical and valuable to the church. We cannot be certain which James was its author although most of the evidence indicates the brother of Jesus and not either of the apostles by this name. It is usually dated about 60 A.D., a period when some of the fervor and first love of the church was fading and in need of encouragement.

If this James was truly the brother of the Lord Jesus, then we see the change he must have made. At first Jesus' brothers did not believe in Him, possibly because of their familiar association as children in the same home. But later this man became influential in the early church, speaking out in the council recorded in Acts 15 and named by Paul as a pillar with Peter and John in Galatians 2:9 and as an apostle in 1:19. Early writers listed James and Paul as apostles in addition to the twelve. He calls himself, not an apostle, but simply "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ."

The epistle is addressed "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad." Here is the true Israel, the believers or brethren, but they evidently were in need of admonition and encouragement. James writes to the rich and those deeply involved in strife perhaps unbelievers or hypocrites as it seems when we compare 5:1-6 and 5:7. At any rate, it contains practical, useful counsel and the only specific directions for the anointing of the sick.

James' writing on justification almost seems to contradict Paul's, but if we study closely, we see rather an indictment of the misuse of Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. James describes in more depth the faith by which we are justified.

May we heed the counsels and practice the true Christian life set forth here by the servant of our Lord Jesus Christ. —L.C.

MEDITATIONS

DEATH

Death is not to be feared and dreaded by the Christian as it is an entrance to a glorious existence. Jesus said, Luke 24:26, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" So should we be willing to suffer the things necessary for us to be gathered to Him.

It is similar to our birth, each taking place when we develop the need for a new mode of life.

COMMUNICATION

It is very important for believers to have communication with one another. As the Scripture says (Gal. 6:6), "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Even as our natural bodies need a constant flow of life-giving blood, so our spiritual bodies need the circulation of the Spirit. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2)

KNOWLEDGE AND RESPONSIBILITY

In Luke 12:47, Jesus said, "And that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes..." Today we cannot plead ignorance with compulsory education and an abundant supply of Bibles and with Jesus knocking at our hearts. We should not follow the popular trend and believe that all light is the result of an accident or a great explosion billions of years ago. Truly there was a great burst of power when God said, "Let there be light." That light of life fills the whole universe. So let us not choose darkness, but let us walk in the light with Jesus.

—Ernest Wagner

BAPTISMS

Again we, the members of the Wakarusa Congregation rejoiced that souls are still responding to the call of the Master. Stephen Beery received Christian baptism upon confession of his faith in Christ November 24. May he be true to Jesus and enjoy the blessings of salvation forever.

—Melvin Coning

We rejoiced with the angels on December 1, 1985, when Denita Huffman was baptized at Bradford, Ohio. May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ keep her faithful unto the eternal reward.

—Hollis Flora

ADDRESS CHANGE

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NOTES OF THANKS

We would like to thank you each for the financial help, food, cards, prayers, and Sunshine boxes. Each kindness was greatly appreciated. Also we'd like to thank those who helped with the other children and came to sit with Stevie at the hospital to relieve us. Thanks to each one. May God bless you.

—Steve and Neva Boone

We sincerely thank everyone for the financial help for Jesse's hospital stay and for the prayers offered for him. May the Lord bless each of you.

—Neil and Lois Martin

The Christian life can be like an ocean, which though wind and tempest churn on the surface is, nevertheless, calm at its depth.

—Selected by Susie Sell

FOR YOUTH: CAREFULNESS

People are all different. Some are slow and careful and others quick and not so careful. Most of us are somewhere in between. But God appreciates carefulness and so do people—like the ones we work for.

Centuries ago a group of young men were cutting down trees, squaring them for beams, and preparing to build a house. One of them was careless about the ax he was using. The head was loose, but he kept on using it. Besides, it was a borrowed ax. Suddenly, as he was swinging the ax, the head flew into the Jordan, for it was by the river that they were cutting trees. It was too late to wish he had tightened the head on the handle! Axes were valuable and hard to replace. The young man cried out to Elisha, the man of God who was working with them: "Alas, master! for it was borrowed." Elisha determined the place where it fell in, cut down a stick to throw in at the same place, and the iron ax head "did swim." It actually floated up from the bottom of the Jordan. The young man, with a flood of relief, reached out and pulled it in.

In a more recent incident, Dr. Bassett of Tuolumne once told me of a couple of fellows he had fixing fence for him. After some time at work, the fellows came in saying they had lost both the expensive fence pliers they were using. It seems that the one young fellow carelessly let his tool slip and fall into the pond where they were working. They couldn't seem to locate it, and, to Dr. Bassett's extreme exasperation, they had thrown in the other tool at the same spot to see if they could locate the first one. Then both were lost! This time there was no Elisha to display the power of God to float the steel.

With us, carefulness pays. Men appreciate it. God approves it. Paul writes to Titus, "That they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works."

Let us make 1986 a year of diligent and careful work whether it be at home, at school, or on a job. There may not be an Elisha nearby to bail us out if we are careless. —L. C.

CHILDREN'S PAGE

FOREVER

How long would you like to live? A hundred years? A thousand years? Would you like to live for a million years, and still be as strong and healthy as a young man or woman?

We find it hard to even imagine how different our lives would be if there were no death. Just think—we could still talk to Adam to see what the world was like in his day, right after it was first created!

Few people live to be more than a hundred years old. A pet dog or cat will not likely see its 20th birthday, a horse or a goose or pigeon its 30th. A songbird may live twenty years, but not likely more than six. Different kinds of fish may live anywhere from two to fifty years, and wild mammals ten to forty years. But how long will you live?

The wonders of nature and our own conscience teach us that we have a wonderful Creator. His Word tells us that we will live forever. Forever? How long is that?

A story is told to help us grasp how long "forever" really is: Suppose you had a solid mountain of hard granite stone a mile long, a mile wide, and a mile high. Every 1000 years a tiny bird would fly up to the huge stone to sharpen his bill. The amount of time it would take for the little bird to thus completely wear away the huge stone, would be only one day of eternity.

What a wonderful God we have! And even though we might not want to live forever here in a sinful world, yet God has promised that those who "do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with (Him)" will someday live in His most glorious Presence—forever and forever!

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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NO. 2

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD

Holy, holy, holy, Lord,
God the Father, and the Word,
God the Comforter, receive
Blessings more than we can give:
Mixed with those beyond the sky,
Chanters to the Lord Most High,
We our hearts and voices raise,
Echoing thy eternal praise.

One, inexplicably Three,
One, in simplest Unity,
God, incline Thy gracious ear,
Us, thy lisping creatures, hear:
Thee, while man, the earth-born, sings,
Angels shrink within their wings,
Prostrate Seraphim above
Breathe unutterable love.

Happy they who never rest,
With thy heavenly presence blest!
They the heights of glory see,
Sound the depths of Deity!
Fain with them our souls would vie;
Sink as low, and mount as high;
Fall o'erwhelmed with love, or soar;
Shout, or silently adore!

—John Wesley

GOD'S REPRESENTATIVES

Every person represents something. To those we meet we represent our families, our communities, our country, the companies we work for, our schools, and above all, our Lord. Christians, especially, are to live in the world as strangers representing a better country and the Almighty King of that land.

In the last few years we have had two different exchange students in our home for an evening. One was from Norway and one from Jamaica. Each in her own way, these girls represented their countries and their own families, and they did it well as they left an impression of kindness, good manners, and interest and concern for their fellowmen. These students are chosen for this very purpose of representing well their various native lands.

It makes me think that each of us, especially as Christians, represents some way of thinking and doing, some set of customs, some ideals and hopes. We leave either a good impression or some other feeling behind us. Paul writes (II Corinthians 5:20), "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ..." and in a sense all Christians occupy this position.

The question I would ask is, "What kind of impression are we leaving behind us as representatives of our native land and our Lord Jesus Christ?" We cannot control how people react to our witness. But we are to be led and filled with God's Holy Spirit that the representation is true—that the right and fair concepts are given as we travel through this country that is really foreign territory to each one whose citizenship is in heaven.

One day as I was putting away hardware and waiting on customers, a salesman representing a seed company made his quarterly call. He immediately began to rearrange merchandise in the garden department so that

his grass seed and other items he sold occupied the most prominent places. Naturally, he wanted to sell grass seed. But he failed to sense the impression he was making. After he left, we had to return the merchandise to its proper place.

Maybe we are like this salesman. We get so interested in our own programs that we forget everything else, like the feelings of those very ones we should be helping.

Then, of course, there is the other extreme in which we try so hard to impress those around us that we lose sight of the very principles we should be promoting.

Our perfect pattern, as in all other areas, is Jesus. His love and compassion for the suffering ones around Him made Him reach out with healing, encouragement, and forgiveness. Those who saw and heard Him, loved Him and followed Him. Their enthusiasm climaxed in the throng's welcoming Him into Jerusalem for the last time. But Jesus also maintained the principles of truth and holiness. He actually insulted and denounced those self-centered rich Jews.

If we would make a good impression, if we would be good ambassadors for God and representatives of His people, let us be like Jesus. Let our love for our fellowmen prompt us to deeds of kindness and encouragement. But let us maintain godliness and know that those who would not hear Jesus also have their counterpart in our time and will not hear us.

For practical application, a young person would be quick to be friendly to young visitors and show interest in them. But the same young person should not show interest or tolerance for the drug traffic, the rock music, the indecent dress of the worldly. Principle here would take precedence over just making a good impression.

In our business dealings we should be honest above all, friendly and helpful, but avoiding any transaction that would be shady or not quite fair and truthful.

In our relationship to the government, we should be prayerful for our rulers, obedient to laws, but not

demanding of our rights or false on our taxes.

With our brethren and our families, may our love shine bright and clear, our pride be resisted, and our godliness be an example to all.

This is no other than the work of God's Holy Spirit. If we yield to Him, our testimony will be right and effective. If we take our own way, or move in our own strength, we will fail in every test.

I have noticed that those around us who have some kind of need are the ones we can serve and "impress." The sick, elderly, unpopular, discouraged, shut in, or crippled all respond to kindness and attention. The poor heard Jesus gladly. But with the self-sufficient, the prosperous, the healthy, we more often say the wrong things and leave the poor testimony. May we be yielded to God and willingly serve in the world as ambassadors for Jesus. —L.C.

MEDITATION: FORCED SERVICE OR FREE GIFT

How do we feel about our Christian service? Do we think of it as something required of us? Or do we appreciate being called and accepted into the Holy Family with Jesus and God? As the father reminded the older brother in the parable of the prodigal son, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." Even so we should appreciate the love and care we receive and hope others will come and share the blessings we enjoy. We are told we should feel the "Spirit of adoption" in our hearts whereby we cry, "Abba, Father." I am told this in the Greek is similar to the way we as children called our fathers "daddy" or "papa." We should feel that closeness to our Heavenly Father. We should help one another with all the power we have; but the battle to overcome Satan and deliver us from this time world, and translate us into the new creation, is the Lord's, and we need to stand firm and see the Salvation of God.

—Ernest Wagner
Modesto, California

BUT WHOSO HARKENETH UNTO ME
SHALL DWELL SAFELY, AND SHALL BE QUIET
FROM FEAR OF EVIL. Proverbs 1:33

Several months ago, this notice appeared on the bulletin board at work: (I had to think, that this would be good for us all to consider. Aren't we all careless at some point? I am thinking about carelessness spiritually.)

BEWARE THE ENEMY

"I am more powerful than the combined armies of the world. I have destroyed more men than all the wars of all nations. I massacre thousands of people every year. I am more deadly than bullets, and I have wrecked more homes than the mightiest of guns.

"In the United States alone, I steal over 500 million dollars each year. I spare no one, and I find my victims among the rich and poor alike, the young and old, the strong and weak; widows know me to their everlasting sorrow. I loom up in such proportions, that I cast my shadow over every field of labor. I lurk in unseen places to do most of my work silently. You are warned against me, yet you heed me not. I am relentless, merciless, and cruel. I am everywhere, in the home, on the streets, in the factory, at railroad crossings, on land, in the air, and on the sea.

"I bring sickness and degradation and death, yet few seek me out to destroy me. I crush; I maim; I will give you nothing, and rob you of all you have.

"I am your worst Enemy; I am Carelessness."

Beware the enemy! Who is our enemy? I am sure we all have one. The enemy of our souls, is so powerful, that we have to keep a double guard on ourselves lest we slip. Lately, we have had cold weather and snow. This makes it dangerous to walk. We can be oh, so careful, but one little miss step, and down we go. This is the way with our walk with the Lord. We can be so careful to walk upright and honest, but just one bad thought, and we start slipping. The devil is there ready to push us down as far as he can. We have

a hymn: "My soul be on thy guard; Ten thousand foes arise; The hosts of sin are pressing hard To draw thee from the skies."

We know somewhat of the many thousands of men that are destroyed in the wars of our land. But I am sure we could multiply that by thousands, to number the multitudes that have been destroyed by sin. One of the biggest reasons that we are so prone to fall, is the way sin slips in. We each one have a special temptation, and Satan knows this. The harder we try to do good, the more resistance there seems to be. I am thankful for my eyes, but it seems, I am always seeing things I shouldn't. We can look at a magazine, go to town, or whatever, and each one of us will see something different. We see what we want to see. If we are not in the right frame of mind, we see things in everything that we shouldn't. Then a multitude of wrong thoughts flow into our minds. When this happens, and we realize that we are falling in the hands of the evil one, how quick we should think of Jesus! But how many times are we feeling sorry for ourselves and think we are worse off than anyone else and let these soul-destroying thoughts linger in our minds. We know of couples who were seemingly happily married for several years, and this killer will destroy the home. It is correctly said, "To be hit by a bullet, we have to be in a straight line with the gun." Also, we have to be standing still. But more deadly than bullets, this weapon of bad thoughts, can anywhere and any time hit us. So it can be said that carelessness of our thought life is the #1 killer of our souls.

We read, "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be a cast away?" (Luke 9:25) Again, we all know that if we lose our souls, in the end of this life, we have lost all. Another place it says, "What will a man give in exchange for his soul?" The answer is, we would give nothing, but how many times, do we find ourselves doing a little trading for this world's goods. So when one soul is lost, there can be no dollar value put on it. It

doesn't matter if you are rich or poor, young or old, strong or weak, the results are the same. I Peter 5:8: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." No, Satan doesn't go around actually roaring. If he would, we would be more aware of his presence; it would be better if he would roar loudly so we would awake out of our sleep. It is rightly said that he lurks in unseen places and does most of his work silently.

We are all warned against Satan, but at times we are too careless. II Peter 3:17: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness."

Certainly, the devil is relentless, merciless, and cruel. Just think of the many lies he is telling people today; not only today, but 6,000 years ago and if the world stands, another 6,000 years. Eve was told that she wouldn't die, but "ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." They didn't die a natural death immediately but just think of the many good things they lost. We read in the Bible of the many that had to suffer because of our Enemy. Hebrews 11: 36-38: "And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."

Again we know that sin will bring sickness, degradation, and death. Some time ago I read about a woman who was slowly losing her health. No doctor could find out what was wrong with her. Finally she had to be in the hospital, but tests and all the modern medicine didn't avail anything. At last, one of the doctors remembered that he had heard that a deep hatred in a person's life could cause depression, and

finally death. Someone questioned her about this, and found out that early in her life, something happened, and from that time on, this hatred grew and landed her in the hospital. After she had confessed and asked forgiveness, she rapidly got better. So we can see that sin can make us not only spiritually sick, but also physically sick, even unto death.

The last sentence, sums up sin, if it isn't taken care of. "I will give you nothing and rob you of all." At first it may seem like there is something great offered, but the greatness is only short-lived. Probably the drunkard, when he is drinking and during the time he is senseless, is happy with himself, but what about when the drink wears off? The rich man that fared sumptuously every day, I am sure, was enjoying himself, but couldn't even give the crumbs to the beggar. We read the conclusion; which do we want? Achan, when he saw the Babylonish garment, the silver and gold, coveted them, and took them. No doubt he thought, "Just these few pieces won't be missed," God had spoken earlier that no one was to take of these. Again we can clearly see the Bible is true. James 1:15: "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Achan, and all he had, was taken and stoned.

No, we today will not be stoned if we covet or do what we know we shouldn't. (Read Galatians 5:19-21.) Even if no stones will hit us till there is life no more, we read of a worse condition that will last forever and ever. Matthew 25:30: "And cast ye that unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Everett Oyler
New Paris, Indiana

I sought my soul—but my soul I could not see.
I sought my God—but my God eluded me.
I sought my brother, and I found all three.

Selected by Ruth Flora

"I WILL GIVE THEM AN EVERLASTING NAME"

Did you ever think about your name—what it means, where it came from? Our names are important to us because they represent our very beings. Most of us were named before we were even born.

Think of Jesus. He was named before He left the womb, and to most people His name was just another name. However, as His life went on, that changed. Jesus became known as a sacred or holy name, a name above all names and everlasting. Isaiah said, "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off." (56:5) "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." (62:2)

When we receive Christ as our Saviour and are born again by the water and of the Spirit; we become new persons, spiritually speaking, and also receive our new names, as countless others have. We join in the ranks of the saints who are joyfully and determinedly marching on to the victory that we can't even see yet, except through faith, but will as long as we keep our eyes on our Father—the source of all this.

The battle is long and hard, the way strewn with despairing discouragements, temptations, depressions, sadness, tears, etc. However, there is happiness, joy, peace, contentment which we can draw from our fellowship and communion with our Father and brethren and sisters. Our purpose and direction we draw from His Word. As we grow in Him, we should become more like Him, so we need to strive to know more and more of Him.

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which

cometh down out of heaven from my God: And I will write upon him my new name." (Rev. 3:12)

A WELCOME TO THE NEW

SANCTIFIED by the waters
In God's holy mystery.
Reborn in spiritual colors,
As men in history.

MADE NEW from the inside-out;
New in spirit and in name.
Holy and reverent, stifling shout,
Free at last from old world shame!

RELEASED from bondage and sin.
Joined with the family of God;
In bonds of love, though still just men,
It's common ground we tread.

SO, WELCOME! it is to you;
New zeal you've given to me.
We're here to help each other through
Til Jesus' face we see!

Ronald L. Cable
Goshen, Indiana

THE GOLDEN YEARS

Old age can be a most rewarding period of life. For those who have found the satisfaction of a loving and close relationship with the Heavenly Father through faith in His Son, the "sunset years" can be more appropriately labeled the "golden years."

Henry Durbanville felt that way. In his book The Best Is Yet To Be: "I feel sorry for folks who don't like to grow old...I revel in my years. They enrich me...I would not exchange...the abiding rest of soul, the measure of wisdom I have gained from the sweet and bitter and perplexing experiences of life; nor the confirmed faith I now have in the...love of God for all the bright and uncertain hopes and tumultuous joys of

youth. Indeed, I would not! These are the best years of my life... The way grows brighter; the birds sing sweeter; the wind blows softer; the sun shines more radiantly than ever before. I suppose 'my outward man' is perishing, but 'my inward man' is being joyously renewed day by day."

Robertson McQuilkin wrote, "God planned the strength and beauty of youth to be physical. But the strength and beauty of age is spiritual. We gradually lose the strength and beauty that is temporary so we'll be sure to concentrate on the strength and beauty that is forever."

May we live in such a way that as we reach that privileged plateau in life, we too can say that the older years are indeed the golden years.

As sunset falls upon one's life,
It's golden rays reveal
Those qualities of faith and love
The years have made so real.

To make a success of old age, you have to start young. He who walks with God will be out of step with the world.

(Excerpts from Our Daily Bread booklet)
Selected by Susan R. Coning

COMMUNION MEETING NOTICE

We, the members of the Old Brethren Church in California, have agreed to hold our Spring Lovefeast, the Lord willing, at Salida on April 19 and 20. We sincerely welcome all to come and be with us at this time of communion and revival.

Joseph L. Cover

CARD OF THANKS

We wish to thank each one who has so kindly remembered our family in prayers, cards, and calls during Mother's recent illness and recovery. My God bless each one.

—Amos and Edna Baker and Family

AM I WORTHY?

I cannot say, "Our," if I live in a watertight spiritual compartment; if I think a special place in heaven is reserved for my denomination.

I cannot say, "Father," if I do not demonstrate the relationship in my daily life.

I cannot say, "Which art in Heaven," if I am so occupied with earth that I am not laying up treasure over there.

I cannot say, "Hallowed be thy name." if I, who am called by His name, am not holy.

I cannot say, "Thy will be done," if I am questioning, resentful, or disobedient to His will for me.

I cannot say, "Give us this day our daily bread," if I am living on past experiences.

I cannot say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," if I harbor a grudge against anyone.

I cannot say, "Lead us not into temptation," if I deliberately place myself or remain in a position where I am likely to be tempted.

I cannot say, "Deliver us from evil," if I am not prepared to fight it in the spiritual realm with the weapon of prayer.

I cannot say, "Thine is the Kingdom," if I don't give the King the disciplined obedience of a loyal subject.

I cannot say, "Thine is the...glory," if I am seeking glory for myself.

I cannot say, "Forever," if my horizons are bound of things of time.

I cannot say, "Amen," if I do not also add, "cost what it may," for to say this prayer honestly...will cost everything.

—W. M. Gass

Selected by Susie Sell

When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Proverbs 16:7

HISTORICAL

HISTORY OF THE BIBLE—I AND II PETER

The two epistles of Peter were written possible about A.D. 66 and 67 during the persecution of the church by Nero. Some think that both Peter and Paul were in Rome at this time. The tone of the first epistle would bear this out as in every chapter Peter mentions suffering or persecution in some aspect.

The areas Peter mentions in I Peter 1:1 as those to whom he is writing were the areas where Paul did much of his teaching and preaching. Halley makes an interesting observation as the possible reason for this:

"It is thought possibly that Peter may have written this letter immediately after Paul's martyrdom, about A.D. 66, and sent it by Silas (5:12), who had been one of Paul's helpers, to these churches which Paul had founded, to encourage them to bear up under their suffering, Silas personally carrying the news of Paul's martyrdom to Paul's Churches." (Halley's Bible Handbook p. 663)

Peter's comment, "The church that is at Babylon... saluteth you..." could very well refer to Rome as a city like Babylon in its wickedness, wealth, and oppression over God's people.

Peter's positive emphasis in II Peter 1:16 on the truth of the Gospel ("For we have not followed cunningly devised fables.. but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.") is a strong and sure testimony for us all. I like this passage to present to one who would question the truth. And yet, we either believe the record or we do not.

Also in II Peter 1:15 is evident Peter's concern that future generations have the record from those who were there. "Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." Some believe this to be a direct reference to Peter's part in Mark's writing of the Gospel story. How good it is that we have the Holy Ghost-inspired words of this useful apostle! —L.C.

THE PILGRIM

YOUTH TODAY—CHURCH TOMORROW

Have you ever thought or realized that we as young people today are making the church of tomorrow? It sounds serious. It is! As youth today we are setting attitudes, appearances, and conduct for the church of tomorrow.

What kind of attitudes are we forming? The attitudes we have now are likely to be the ones we have later. We need to think on the good of others, learning to have respect and love for them and mostly to God. If we do, it will be easier to "make it together" in the church of tomorrow. Sometimes it seems difficult to have good attitudes toward parents and older friends, but we can benefit from their experiences if we listen to them. They are, no doubt, concerned for the future church.

Our appearance is another concern for the church of tomorrow. Part of our appearance is our countenance. Does it show we are happy and contented, that He is in us? Another part of our appearance is our dress. It can display a respect to God's idea of dress, or it may prove we have chosen to suit ourselves. If we realize we are setting standards for the church of tomorrow, God's standards will surely be our goal.

Finally, we need to consider our conduct as it will also have an effect on the church of tomorrow. Some young people today are willing to be in physical danger for the happiness of being a Christian. Do we demonstrate the same willingness and joy here where Christianity is free? What do our speech and habits tell others? How consistent and effective is our witness? Consider the activities we enjoy. Are they ones that encourage a closeness to each other and to Him? Do we enjoy more to associate with the people who show fruits of a Spirit-filled life? Do we form firm convictions of truth and high standards, and then are we able to stand up for them? Do we set high goals to accomplish things worthwhile, and then do we put our all into reaching them? Let's do like the song says:

"Let us work with a will in the strength of youth
And loyally stand for the kingdom of truth!"

Why not show by our attitudes, appearances, and conduct that the youth of today have great potential for the church of tomorrow—potential to help build a church that is without spot, wrinkle, or blemish, that is holy, that is glorious! (Ephesians 5:27)

—Miriam Coning
Goshen, Indiana

BAPTISMS

We brethren, sisters, and friends of Rio Verde, Brazil, rejoiced with the holy angels when Geralda Gonçalves dos Santos was received into our fellowship on January 5 by a public renewal of her vows of faith in Jesus Christ and holy baptism. May she continue to be faithful and helpful in the kingdom of our Father in heaven.

—Wade Flora

We of the Goshen congregation were made to rejoice when another precious soul, Aaron Beery, was received into our fellowship on January 12 by a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ and water baptism. May he be faithful in the service of the Master.

—Melvin Coning

On Sunday, January 19, we rejoiced with the angels of heaven when Edward Flora was taken into church fellowship by Christian baptism at Bradford, Ohio. May he be faithful unto eternal life.

—Hollis Flora

BIRTHS

ROYER - A daughter, Jewel Rebecca, born January 15 to Joe and Elizabeth Royer of Mishawaka, Indiana.

WALKER - A son, Jared Elijah, born February 9 to Carrie and David Walker of Waterford, California.

CHILDREN'S PAGE

DOING THE CHORES

Did you ever lie on your back lazily in the warm summer sunshine and envy the birds their freedom? "How nice it would be," you may have thought, "to be a bird! I could just fly around to any place I would want to visit. I would fly quickly to the top of a tall tree and sing happily from my high perch. I could go without effort to another part of the forest without having to wade through snow or mud, or tangle with thorns. And best of all, I wouldn't have to do any work—no chores in the morning, no chores in the evening—just fun and freedom all the time."

Did you ever have thoughts like those? Possibly not. But if you have, I would like to take them away from you, for they are simply not true.

Certainly animals do not have a list of jobs written on a blackboard for them to do. They don't have to help with the laundry, haul firewood, mop floors, or take care of livestock and pets. But they do have much to do. Even some of God's smallest creatures, such as bees and ants, have cleaning, building, hauling, repairing, and many other jobs to do. Young birds and animals spend hours every day just in finding enough to eat and in keeping themselves clean. And as they grow older they have nests to build or burrows to dig, food to gather for winter, and young to feed and rear, often while surrounded by danger.

"Chores?" If we could only realize what a blessing they are to us...if we could somehow see how much they can help prepare us for a happy useful life of service...the very word would have different meaning!

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

HE LIVES! HE REIGNS!

Hail, oh, hail the Risen Saviour,
Lamb of God for sinners slain,
Victor now, He reigns forever,
He who died but lives again.

He who rose o'er death triumphant,
Broke the power of hell's domain,
Freedom bought for every captive,
Rest from every sin-forged chain.

Who is he that may not conquer,
Since his Lord has conquered all?
Rouse, ye fainting ones! take courage!
Hear, oh, hear the Master's call!

Weary ones, come bring your burdens;
Hungry ones, come freely feast;
Whosoever will is welcome,
E'en the poorest and the least.

Yes, oh, yes, He lives to save us,
Cleanse and keep us day by day;
Through this present world of evil,
He'll protect us all the way.

Sons of earth, shout out His praises!
Sound afar your glad refrains!
Freedom's bells, peal out your anthems!
Christ is Risen! He Reigns! He Reigns!

—Katie V. Hall

Selected by Susie Sell

SUFFERING CHRIST

A public dispute regarding Creation vs. Evolution is now being carried on in our local paper in the "Letters to the Editor" column. Some are written sincerely and truthfully and some seem to miss the main points and show "more heat than light." Perhaps it is more than coincidence that this dispute is being carried on at this time as the minds of Christians turn more to the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we did not have God's Word, if there were no truth in the world, if all were only speculation and theory (like evolution), there would be no occasion for argument. But when truth confronts error, then conflict results.

Paul states the case: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (I Tim. 1:15) This "faithful saying" tells the truth of God's efforts to save man and acknowledges that "I" (Paul and you and I) are the ones that need saving. The acceptance of this truth is against man's carnal nature because it limits his independence and admits his selfishness. And it is this truth that Satan tries his best to cover and ridicule.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners! Some say Jesus was born to die. It is true, but He did more than die. He fulfilled the prophecies, He healed and helped the people, He brought the words of the Father, He suffered, and He rose again.

His suffering cannot be told, but we know it began before Gethsamane and Calvary. It is recorded that Jesus wept over Jerusalem and at the tomb of Lazarus. How many other times He sorrowed and suffered in tears for us, we do not know. But we know it must have caused Him great pain to see the hard-heartedness of men and to fail to reach many of the hard hearts.

We can get a view of this kind of suffering when we see someone (perhaps even someone very close to us) going on in error—blindly refusing to accept the salvation of God and living for self. Jesus saw His people in darkness, perverting the truth, making a good outward show, but having evil hearts. He saw them persecute and shun one another and even enslave and slay each other. He saw the lack of love, and He suffered and sorrowed for them.

Jesus' suffering seemed to reach its peak in Gethsemane. There He wrestled with the awful prospect of "becoming sin for us." The pure Son of God was going to be disrobed and publicly shamed and put to death as though He were the lowest criminal—despised by man and placed under the curse of the law. What indignation rises in us when we are accused of something we did not do! We will escape and justify ourselves if we possibly can. Jesus said, "Not my will, but thine be done," because He knew there was no other way to save us. But as He struggled "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

His physical suffering eventually involved nearly every part of His body. He was struck before the high priest by one of the officers. He was buffeted by the soldiers, spit on, crowned with the thorns; His back felt the scourge of Pilate's men; His hands and feet were nailed through to the cross; and after His death His side was pierced by the soldiers spear.

What He endured, Oh, who can tell? Our response must be to believe and obey Him. But it must go even beyond simple acceptance or acknowledgement of the truth. We must somehow suffer with Him. Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ..." He also speaks of "the fellowship of his sufferings." We are to die with Jesus. With this as a prospect and an experience for Christians, somehow the Creation-Evolution debate fades into insignificance. We realize as we enter into the suffering with Christ that this is an experience—a life—a joy. We have progressed beyond the debate-contention stage. Paul says, "From henceforth let no

man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." (Galatians 6:17) On this subject the poem by Amy Carmichael searches our hearts:

NO SCAR?

Hast thou no scar?

No hidden scar on foot, or side, or hand?

I hear thee sung as mighty in the land,

I hear them hail thy bright ascendant star,

Hast thou no scar?

Hast thou no wound?

Yet I was wounded by the archers, spent,

Leaned Me against a tree to die; and rent

By ravening wolves that compassed me, I swooned:

Hast thou no wound?

No wound? no scar?

Yet, as the Master shall the servant be

And pierced are the feet that follow Me;

But thine are whole: can he have followed far

Who hath no wound nor scar?

From one of those letters in support of Evolution come these words: "Globally, of course, most of the world's 5 billion people haven't even heard of creationism." Perhaps this is true. (They probably haven't heard of evolution either.) Christian people should sorrow and suffer that multitudes are in darkness. But unbelievers should hide their heads in shame, for unbelief is what hinders the spread of God's glorious Word and His offer of Salvation. Jesus has suffered, died, and risen to life and glory. The Holy Spirit is here to convince and testify and enable. May we believe, sorrow, suffer, and pray that the Gospel of Salvation through Jesus' sacrifice and atonement may reach more and more people before Jesus returns.

When Jesus comes again, it will not be to suffer. Hebrews 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

—L.C.

OLD or GOLD?

What comes to your mind when you hear the word "old"? Worn out? Antiquated antiques? Junk? Or wrinkled, bent, complainy, and cranky old men and women?

The modern terminology for referring to old people includes "elderly," "geriatric," "Golden Age," "aged," and even "superannuated." "Venerable" is an older term, often found used in old story books. It suggests dignity and quality of old age that are worthy of great respect.

Which words do you want the young generation to use in referring to you in your old age? Assuming that you pick the most complimentary ones, it means two things. Number one: You must start now to build your personality and character into one worthy of complimentary terms; for it has rightly been said that "in old age you will be what you are when younger, only more so!" If you are of a sour, grouchy, complainy disposition now, old age will only increase those negative traits. After all, there will be more to be bitter about, more to grouch about, and certainly more loneliness, aches, and pains to complain about.

But if we develop a pleasant, joyous outlook on life, thinking little of our own aches and pains and rejoicing in the good things of life, then we can count on being sweet, dear old people. (This is not to say that strokes and other disorders cannot completely change a person's personality. They sometimes do. That we leave with God.)

Number two: If we wish to be referred to by complimentary terms in our old age, it is only right for us to refer to and treat our elders with much kindness and respect. Remember the Golden Rule!

Today's society is geared to youth; "Maintain youthful appearance, energy and conduct at all cost," is what the media proclaims. In II Timothy 2:22, Paul tells Timothy to "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow

righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." We are to desire maturity.

Americans, as a whole, tend to think of the old people as a burden. We are burdened with their presence in our lives and homes. We have more important things to do than to listen to their five-times-told stories, and we do not want to listen to their wisdom for our lives.

What does the Bible teach us about the aged?

Job 8:8-10: "For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers: (for we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:) Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?"

Job 12:12: "With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding."

Job 32:6b-7: "I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom."

Proverbs 23:22: "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old."

Leviticus 19:32: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord."

Proverbs 20:29: "The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head."

Let us have compassion on the old, feeble, and tottery among us. they have had many experiences in their lives we will never have. They have loved, worked, had joyous times and troublesome times just like we are now having. They are still human beings, created and loved by God. They have basic needs like all humans, including the need to be loved, to have someone to love and to do for, the need to feel accepted as one of us, to belong.

Sometimes it seems they cannot possibly have any more use in this world, but as long as God leaves them

here, then there is a purpose for it. That purpose may be none other than to teach us compassion, love, kindness, and patience. May we learn our lessons well.

It touches our hearts with sadness to see people reaching the end of life's way who have not made peace with their Creator. We wonder, sometimes, how much, or what, we can do to help them see Jesus before they die. But they have lived their lives; they have had the same chance, the same calling, that we have. And they have made their choice.

How encouraging, though, to see an old saint of the Lord's coming to the end of life's way. I can almost envy them; they have climbed their last mountain, borne their latest affliction, have been nourished in God's Word and established through prayer and meditation during their period of inactivity in old age. They have been strengthened and built up—perfected. And no longer do worldly things, ideas, or pressures tempt them! They've won the battle! While we, the following generations, have so many, many pitfalls still ahead of us.

Surely, old age is a Golden time of life for the Christian! Youth is the time to prepare for our Golden Years by becoming Christians and growing more Christlike daily. Then when we reach our Golden Age, we will be well prepared to use our "leisure" time wisely, being perfected in God's love. And we will have earned the complimentary titles of old age!

—Linda Frick
Gettysburg, Ohio

MEDITATIONS

FAITH

Faith is a great life-giving power of God. Jesus used a tiny grain of mustard to show how it contained that element of life to bud and grow a great plant in which the birds could find shelter. When the Greeks

sought Him, He said it was time for Him to be glorified. He likened Himself to a grain of corn falling to the ground and dying, then springing up and bearing much fruit. As His Father commanded and gave Him power to do. Our natural bodies are not fitted for that glorious, abundant life. The Apostle Paul likened our bodies to bare grain which we plant in hope. As Jesus said from the cross: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

LOVE

We are apt to feel that Jesus is more loving than the Father. But it was God in Christ that made Him so loving and self-sacrificing. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (I John 4:16)

So if we rightly understand, we realize They are one in heart and love for us. John 17:20,21 says: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

MERCY vs. JUDGMENT

The Scriptures tell us mercy rejoiceth against judgment. (James 2:13) The many divisions among believers plainly tell us that too much emphasis is put on judgment and not enough on forbearance and forgiveness.

What a welcome change it would be for believers to search to see how many teachings of Jesus they could agree on. The Scriptures tell us to live peaceably with all men, on our part. How much more should we live so with believers!

—Ernest Wagner

English Oaks Convalescent Hospital
Modesto, California

GOLGOTHA HILL—CALVARY HILL

Eternal light streams on His path
As Jesus leaves Heaven's splendor;
Coming to save sinners from wrath,
Born an earthly babe so tender:
Down from holy habitation,
Away from His great Father's throne,
Comes to suffer, to bleed and groan!

Chorus: "Golgotha Hill, Calvary Hill,
I come to do my Father's will;
Calvary Hill, Golgotha Hill,
I come to you, life's blood to spill!
From our heavenly home above,
Where glory's light outshines the sun;
We give the world Our greatest love,
God the Father and Christ the Son!"

Pure light of truth shines on His path
While Jesus walks earth's mortal ground;
Facing the hour of His bloodbath,
God's Word and works do all astound.
Betrayed by one who eats with Him,
On the cruel cross He prays and cries;
Pays the full price for all man's sin,
Lays down His life and bravely dies!

Light of glory on His pathway
Jesus rises from death to life;
Then flies away to endless day,
Forever freed from earthly strife.
Back to God's throne He comes to fame,
Brings there His own with Him to reign;
Redeemed proclaim their Saviour's name,
Who lived and died and lives again!

Hollis Edward Flora

ON THE CROSS

Behold, behold the Lamb of God,
On the cross, on the cross;
For you He shed His precious blood,
On the cross, on the cross;
O hear His agonizing cry,
"E-loi, la-ma, sa-bach-tha-ni,"
Draw near, and see your Saviour die,
On the cross, on the cross.

Behold His arms extended wide,
On the cross, on the cross;
Behold His bleeding hands and side,
On the cross, on the cross;
The sun withholds his rays of light,
The heavens are clothed in shades of night,
While Jesus doth for sinners fight,
On the cross, on the cross.

And now the mighty deed is done,
On the cross, on the cross;
The battle fought, the victory won,
On the cross, on the cross;
"'Tis finished," now the Saviour cries;
To heaven He turns His languid eyes;
Then bows His sacred head and dies,
On the cross, on the cross.

Where-e'er I go, I'll tell the story
Of the cross, of the cross;
In nothing else my soul shall glory,
Save the cross, save the cross;
And this my constant theme shall be,
Through time and in eternity,
That Jesus shed His blood for me,
On the cross, on the cross.

Anonymous

COMMUNION MEETING NOTICES

We, the members of the Old Brethren Church in California, have agreed to hold our Spring Lovefeast, the Lord willing, at Salida on April 19 and 20. We sincerely welcome all to come and be with us at this time of communion and revival.

—Joseph L. Cover

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Old Brethren Church will be held this year, the Lord willing, on May 16, 17, and 18 at the meeting house near Wakarusa, Indiana, Friday will be council day; Saturday and Sunday (Pentecost) will be for public preaching; and Saturday evening will be for the Communion service. A hearty invitation is extended to all of our brethren, sisters, and friends to attend.

—Melvin Coning

BAPTISM

On the morning of February 16 we brethren and sisters of Rio Verde, Brazil, rejoiced with the angels of heaven when Elizabeth Cardoso dos Santos was received into our fellowship by a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ and Holy Baptism. May she be faithful in the service of the Master.

—Wade Flora

BE KIND

Be kind to everyone you meet
Along life's rugged way,
For it will make you happier
Throughout the live-long day.

—Linda Wagner

HISTORICAL

HISTORY OF THE BIBLE—THE EPISTLES OF JOHN

John, the beloved apostle, was the author of five New Testament books: The Gospel According to John, The Revelation, and the three epistles bearing his name. John lived long after the other apostles had been martyred, and it was apparently during this later life period when his writing was done.

John's first epistle does not name the author or those to whom it is written. But it has always been recognized as John's writing and intended for the churches around Ephesus where John spent his last days on earth.

As the possible setting for the teaching of this letter, we quote from Halley's Bible Handbook, pages 671 and 672:

"Christianity had been in the world some sixty or seventy years, and in many parts of the Roman Empire had become an important religion and a powerful influence. Naturally there came to be all sorts of efforts to amalgamate the Gospel with prevailing philosophies and systems of thought.

"A form of Gnosticism which was disrupting the churches in John's day taught that there is in human nature an irreconcilable principle of dualism: that spirit and body are two separate entities: that sin resided in the flesh only: that the spirit could have its raptures, and the body could do as it pleased: that lofty mental mystical piety was entirely consistent with voluptuous, sensual life. They denied the Incarnation, that God had in Christ actually become flesh, and maintained the Christ was a phantom, a man in appearance only.

"In Ephesus a man named Cerinthus was leader of this cult. He claimed for himself inner mystic experiences and exalted knowledge of God, but was a voluptuary. Throughout this epistle it seems that John must have had these heretics in mind, in insisting that Jesus

was the actual, material, authentic manifestation of God in the flesh, and that genuine knowledge of God must result in moral transformation."

John's themes of love, Christian virtue, sight, and assurance make this portion of Holy Scripture valuable and inspiring to Christians of all ages.

II John, like the two other epistles, does not give the author's name but is addressed from "the elder unto the elect lady and her children..." John was truly an elder in all its meanings. The lady may have been a person or a congregation symbolized by this term. The letter is brief and full of John's main theme of love. He also warns here, as in his other writings, against false doctrines, like in this passage (verses 10 & 11): "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." He refers particularly to those "who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." (verse 7) But how important also it is that we lose not the doctrine of the new commandment to love one another. (verse 5)

III John is a short letter addressed to a brother named Gaius. It, too, is full of good counsel and joyful encouragement. A particular warning is given against one "Diotrephes who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them." May it also serve to remind us of our place of humble service in the world and before God. —L.C.

Our goal—our one consuming life goal—must not be for marriage any more than for recognition, security, power, or wealth. Success in the Christian life is measured only in terms of glory brought to God. Every Christian needs to ask, "Is Jesus Christ getting out of my life what He paid for?"

Käaren Witte in "Assignment: Singleness"

Selected from Christian Life by Martha Cover

Dear Young People,

We are not very old, but we have seen many groups of young people that were not very respectful. Some would talk out loud during church, write on benches or worst of all, not listen to the preached word. I remember reading of some little children that were very disrespectful. As Elisha was on his way to Bethel, little children came out of the city, and mocked him saying "Go up thou bald head, go up thou bald head." Two she bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two children.

Not long after we moved to this vicinity, one evening someone knocked on our door. Several young boys came for the evening. You will never know how much we appreciated that. How thankful we are that you didn't have to go to town to enjoy yourself. Many of you have not yet chosen to follow Christ, and many of you are young in the faith. But I am sure that you all know that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

Another thing we rejoice in, is that you go where your parents go for Sunday dinner. You not only go, but you listen and participate in the conversation. You are kind to the aged. I can tell it isn't pretending: it is real. When there is work to be done, you are there. When you are in a group at young folks playing together, we are delighted to see that you are all enjoying each other. When we are at your gatherings, we feel like one of you; we enjoy ourselves to the fullest. This couldn't be if you couldn't mingle with older ones, so thank you.

Just now we are thinking of the older "unmarrieds." God has a special purpose in your life. God bless you for the good you are doing. Paul says in I Cor. 7:7, "For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that." I am sure it is a gift of God to live a single life and be happy in the Lord. In verse 34 of the same chapter: "...The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit..." This isn't saying those that are married do not care for these things

but we all know the more we are involved in, the harder it is to center our minds on the things we should.

Now we have listed several things that we can commend you for. There are many more not mentioned. We are not saying there aren't any areas that need improving. We older ones need to improve each day, so we can't expect you to be perfect. We must each work daily to strive for perfection. Again we can rejoice "that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." We all know the good in you didn't just happen. There were many long hard years preparing for what you are today. You only count for a small percent of the preparation. II Timothy 1:5 says: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also." So you can see your grandparents were good examples to their children. Now your parents are following the Lord. Before long you will have children. So it goes on and on until the Lord says it is enough.

You are young and several of you are just beginning your Christian walk. Take your Christian walk seriously. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (II Timothy 2:15) Study God's word daily, and memorize the Scripture. You can remember it so much better while your minds are young. When you study, take one topic and look up all the references on that subject. Some good topics to start with are, faith, repentance, baptism, salutation, the covering, and feetwashing. Another good help while your mind is young and alert, is to learn the order of the books of the Bible. This all helps us to not be embarrassed, and to "...Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." I Peter 3:15.

In every decision ask, "What does God want me to do?" Keep striving toward the mark for the prize!

A grateful Brother and Sister, Everett and Nancy

CHILDREN'S PAGE

VIGILANCE

Have you ever been teased about sleeping while you were standing up? Of course you know you can not stand on your feet while you are asleep. But did you know that God made birds so they can perch on a branch while they are sleeping? That's right. He knew it would be too dangerous for them to sleep on the ground where a prowling animal could easily catch them before they could awaken enough to fly away. So He designed their front toes and hind toes so that when the bird lifts up and straightens his leg the toes will relax their hold on the perch. But when the leg is sharply bent, as it is when the bird sleeps, the toes clamp the perch tightly without any effort from the bird. Imagine! Balanced on a perch, but fast asleep!

God did not design you and me so we can sleep on our feet—ready for instant flight. But He gave us a much greater intellignace, a spirit of wisdom to help keep us from danger. The Old Testament tells about some soldiers who didn't lay down their weapons even when they were drinking from a stream—they were wise men, and careful. And it tells about some men who were rebuilding a wall to fortify a city—with tools in one hand and weapons in the other. We do not likely have men who would like to destroy us, but we have an enemy who would like to defile us with bad attitudes and bad habits. Even when we think we are safe, "all is well, no enemy is in sight"—we need to be careful. Our blessed weapons such as obedience, good conscience, and purity need to be close at hand, ready for instant use. Even when it seems safe to "sleep."

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

HOLY SPIRIT, COME

We believe, O God, our Father,
Thou in condescending grace,
Hast the human heart created
For the Spirit's dwelling place;
Nothing else can fill the longing,
Nothing else can satisfy,
Till He comes in all His fulness,
And the temple occupy.

First we came to Thee, O Father,
Dead in trespasses and sin,
Thou in love and great compassion
Opened Thine arms, and took us in;
Now we would present our bodies
As a living sacrifice;
This our reasonable service,
And the altar sanctify.

Come we then with hearts surrendered
And abandoned to Thy will,
Pleading that the Holy Spirit
May our every bosom fill;
Cleanse us now and wholly save us
From the power of guilt and sin.
Then in all Thy glorious fulness,
Take up Thine abode within.

—Mrs. C. H. Morris

WITNESSES WITH POWER OF THE SPIRIT

Those 120 disciples who waited in Jerusalem were really not so much different from us. They had their difficulties and distractions, their frictions and envies. They had quarrelled about who should be the greatest. Some had suggested calling fire down on their adversaries. They had tried to forbid others to act in Jesus' name simply because they weren't of their own little group. They had also fallen asleep when Jesus needed them to watch with Him and had run away when Jesus was arrested. Jesus had to teach them and rebuke them time and again. In many ways they were a very ordinary group.

In another way this group was very special. Human and imperfect as they were, they were also Jesus' followers. Jesus referred to His disciples as "ye which have followed me." Peter had said, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee." As followers of Jesus they were in line for some special events.

Jesus had told them to wait. He had made three distinct promises or prophecies to them that only God could make. When we state our intentions we are to add "if the Lord will," because we have no control over the future and cannot be sure that God will approve our plans. But here Jesus, the Son of God, tells His followers what to expect if they obediently wait:

"Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost..."

The disciples knew what water baptism was. John had baptized and so had Jesus. In fact, John had told the revelation God had given him, "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." Only the experience itself could reveal what this would mean. The wind, the fire, the tongues were all evidences of this overwhelming experience. Later they could recognize the same bestowal of the Holy Spirit on the

Samaritans and on the Gentiles. (Acts 8:17, 10:44-46)

How can we evaluate this baptism or gift of the Holy Spirit which is for us as well as them? We are told by Paul (I Corinthians 12:3) that we cannot even say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Romans 8:26 tells us that we are so infirm that we do not know what we should pray for "but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." All inspiration is from Him. We can do nothing to further God's kingdom on earth without the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit we are like a furnace without fire, a pen without ink, a saw with no teeth. What is a man or a church without love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance?

With the Holy Spirit the disciples were changed men and women. They no longer wondered when and how to begin to fulfill the commission with which Jesus had charged them. By the Spirit they began at once and by the Spirit three thousand souls were "added to them."

"Ye shall receive power..."

The disciples knew Jesus had power. They had even used this power by doing miracles in His name. But they were powerless when Jesus was taken and crucified. They met behind closed doors for fear of the Jews. Where was the power? On the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon them, this power was bestowed, and they were no longer afraid. After this we see Peter and John and all the apostles standing before the rulers and boldly declaring their primary allegiance to God rather than men. We see them doing the miracles and the "greater works" Jesus said they would do.

We see the power in the world today, or how else could we stand against the floods of temptation and unbelief and lust around us? What other power could preserve God's people and God's word through the centuries of opposition and persecution? If any have not felt His power and feel helpless against temptation,

be assured that it is available by humbly asking and submitting to God and letting His Spirit take control.

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me..."

Witnesses "bear witness" or testify to truth. In court they are "sworn in" to tell the truth and nothing but the truth. A witness to a crime or an accident tells what he saw. I was once called as a witness because I had accepted and initialed a check which turned out to be one of many bad ones written by a customer to various businesses. I was a reluctant witness, but I had to go. I had only to say for certain that the initials on the check were mine—that I had, in fact, received the check. We have much more to tell today about what God has done for us—if we will be willing witnesses.

Witnesses are vital since they establish the truth. Jesus states this principle in Matthew 18:16 "...that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." John writes, "(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you..." (I John 1:2,3)

The number has grown from that 120 into thousands and millions. We join that "great cloud of witnesses" who were even before the 120 but looked forward to the days of the Messiah and His salvation.

Yes, we are ordinary people with our limitations, our humanness, and our fears. But God offers us the experience of the early Christians. We, too, can have the Holy Spirit and His power bestowed upon us, and we, too, can become witnesses of Jesus' resurrection, glory, and grace. God warns us, "Be not deceived!" More than ever, the world needs the truth proclaimed. Jesus said, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." May we be faithful witnesses. —L.C.

HOPE OF THE CHURCH

The Old Brethren Church of today has a wonderful heritage. Two very important principles that the Old Brethren have upheld in their doctrine and practice in the past are still very critical for us to maintain.

First is the Brethren's emphasis on the superiority and finality of God's word, the Bible. Our "creed" (if we have one) is that the New Testament is our only guide for faith and practice. This basic principle, when taught and practiced, has been the foundation for many peaceful and productive years. Violation of this principle, either written or spoken, has resulted in many victories for Satan. Disobedience in daily practice to the teachings of Christ and the apostles has led to many being drawn away to the world and has been cause for separations and reorganizations of brethren and sisters desiring to live closer to our Lord. (II Timothy 2:16, 17)

The second principle that has been and hopefully will continue to be emphasized is charity or love—charity in the home, at work and in the church. The love of Christ has often been and still is displayed in the Brethren's stand on non-resistance, the fellowship of believers, our close-knit families, in business, in church government, and many other areas.

The Scriptural backing for this principle is enormous. The love of God is one of the most effective tools that the Brethren have used in their church. It has been effectively used to maintain stability, to insure growth, to promote unity and to solve problems. John 13:34, Ephesians 4:31,32, I Corinthians 13:8

The means to have unity, peace and growth are just as available to us today as in the past. Are we willing to let the word of God and the love of Christ work? If so, we have every assurance that the desired results will be achieved. If not, the results will be devastating.

As the youngest minister in the Old Brethren Church, I feel inexperienced and unqualified in many ways,

especially in church problems. But this I know: The Lord wants us to be victorious! Not over each other but over Satan. By putting God first, others second and ourselves last we will be triumphant!

As Christians our personal relationship to Christ must be our first priority. If this is what it should be, the rest of our life in thought and actions will be a glory to God and a testimony for Jesus Christ. Let us be careful and guard against any doctrine that even suggests that an individual's spiritual condition is governed by anything other than the word of God. The closer we are to God, the closer we'll be to each other.

The church is in a crucial age. The Biblical warnings of Satan's influence prior to our Lord's coming are evident more each day. Our church is not exempt from this influence, but with an increased emphasis on Bible truths, charity and personal relationships with God we have every assurance of being able to live faithfully.

If the Lord tarries, the future of our children and young people lies heavily in the hands of the church members of today, and in particular its leaders. We as young parents need stability and security. We need confidence and hope that someday our children will be led in the paths of peace also. Help us!

I know that God will have a church, a true church and many faithful people waiting for His return when He comes again. My prayer is that every member of the Old Brethren Church will be a part of the company that is changed in the twinkling of an eye and caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord and be with Him forever.

May we each be planted firmly on the rock of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, and rest confident in the fact that the gates of hell shall not prevail against us. Let us strive to be faithful to the Lord and to each other, to keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

—Written in Christian love, Lloyd Wagner, Modesto, Cal.

"...AND THE FIRE SHALL TRY EVERY MAN'S WORK
OF WHAT SORT IT IS." I CORINTHIANS 3:13

Several weeks ago at work, I was to make two ninety-minute fire doors. These doors will hold up in a fire for ninety minutes if the correct materials are used. First we have a frame that is fire treated; then we have a chart telling us how to mix the fireproof glue. We now have the frame glued together. Inside the frame, we put a special mineral core that will not burn. After the frame and core are all together, there is a thin layer of veneer glued on both sides. We now have two ninety-minute fire doors. These doors are called passage doors, because they go from one room to another. By just looking at them, you couldn't tell them from any other door.

When mixing the glue, I had to think how easy it would be to get careless, and not fully go by the chart. Also, there are some things that we dare not use or the fireproofing would be void. Even if we used things we shouldn't and weren't too careful, when it is all mixed up, who would know the difference? The only way others would know is if there was a fire. If the glue wasn't mixed right, although we had a fire-treated frame, the doors would fall apart in extreme heat.

Man also has a frame, and in the center there is a special core(soul) that need never never die. In our Christian walk, we also need to be fire-treated. There are many flames that will engulf us from day to day. There are also many ingredients that we cannot use when mixing our glue(love), if we want it fireproof. There are many examples of men in the Bible that didn't have the proper mixture, and when things got a little too hot for them, their frame fell apart. We also have the record of many that were 100% fireproof. We can think of three that were cast in a furnace that was heated seven times hotter than ever before. After they were thrown in, it appeared to some that there were four walking around. When they were called to come out, they didn't even have the smell of smoke on their

clothes. This is true fireproofing. We have a perfect chart to go by to build our life, but too many times we get careless and cut corners; then we wonder what happened. Jesus says, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved..." We are to be smaller doors, open to receive one another. Our lives should show others the way to this Eternal door.

Jesus humbled Himself and became like you and me. I am sure He didn't look different from other men. We all know the trials and pain He went through, but truly he passed the fire test. Even the centurion said, "Truly this was the Son of God." Again Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. (John 10:11) I trust we can all more closely go by the perfect chart and example. Let's examine ourselves day by day to see if we have the correct ingredients.

—Everett Oyler

New Paris, Indiana

BREATH OF LIFE

"Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it and spirit to them that walk therein." (Isaiah 42:5)

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7)

And so the breath of life was started, and with the miracle of life and birth, the breath of life and living souls has continued through generation after generation until the present time.

The death in a short while of three persons close to me has caused me to ponder much about how fragile a thing this breath of life is. We sometimes call it the thread of life, and truly it is—a very fine thread between life and death.

Mankind sometimes causes this breath to cease by

different means. He can also resuscitate a patient by getting the heart started again, but this sometimes leaves brain damage.

And then one wonders: what was the condition of the soul before God when the breath of life stopped? I have stood many times at a bedside and watched the last breath leave the body, and thought, "How good that the soul is in the hands of a just God." Ought we then as Matthew 10:28 tells us "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

There is another kind of life. The birth of a new born baby is a miracle, and how breath begins and a new soul is born is a marvel to us. We as individuals have no choice about being born the first time. But there is another kind of birth or new life that is by choice. That is a new life in Christ.

And what a beautiful thing this new life is to behold, when the soul yields to God's call to the heart and begins a new life in Christ. We rejoice each time another soul invites Christ into his heart and requests baptism. We need to encourage them, support them, and grow in grace with them.

Much could be written on these subjects and much time could be spent studying God's word on these subjects. I hope these few thoughts I've shared will help us think often on these things.

Elma Moss
Greenville, Ohio

BAPTISM

We of the Salida Congregation rejoiced much when another precious soul, Kevin Garber, was received into our fellowship April 6 by a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ and Holy Baptism. May he be faithful and helpful in the Kingdom of God.

—Joseph L. Cover

CALVARY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The heavens scowled sudden and blackly
On this most depraved deed of men.
Their Maker they murdered hangs slackly,
But still intercedes in deep pain.

The earth beneath sobs with great quaking;
The rocks of the mountains are riven.
The graves of the saints are up-breaking,
As earthlings prevail over heaven.

Creation grieves with its Creator,
Expiring on Golgotha's hill.
He—man's lone Emancipator—
Grows faint as the evening grows chill.

His friends, sunk in sad disillusion,
Are watching the scene from afar,
As death with its tearful intrusion
Leaves them without Hope's shining star.

The minions of night are rejoicing
To see their great Challenger dead,
And now in loud clamor are voicing
Their joy at no judgment ahead.

But then with the deepest dejection,
They see their false hopes quickly fall;
For He is all men's Resurrection,
And He will be judging them all.

So sinners and demons will tremble,
For some day before Him they'll stand;
Before Him they all shall assemble
To answer the law's just demand.

For He is the Judge of all nations;
All people His praises shall sing
Who laid a bright City's foundations—
Creator, Redeemer and King.

When sin is forever extinguished,
And death stops exerting its pall;
His kingdom to God is relinquished,
That God may be all and in all.

By John F. Dorsey Selected by Susie Sell

AN EVENING PRAYER

"Thank you, dear Lord,
For this beautiful day."
How can I say it?
There's such disarray...

The dishes are stacked,
The floor goes unswept;
The mending's undone,
This house is unkempt!

But, thank you, dear Lord,
For this beautiful day;
The children are smiling
In their happy way.

We filled all our vases
With gay Springtime's best;
Listened for birds,
And found a new nest.

The cookies were burned,
And the bread didn't rise;
But we touched each child,
Looked into their eyes.

So, thank you, dear Lord,
For this beautiful day;
The children will too soon
Be gone away.

—Susan Harper
Nappanee, Indiana

MEDITATIONS: THE SPIRIT

When Phillip and Andrew told Jesus the Grecians wanted to see Him, He knew His witness of the truth had spread beyond His own nation and it was time to finish His witness, and let the Spirit, who could reach every living soul on the earth, come and carry on the work, to all that sought the truth without respect of persons. To each of us that seek the truth is given the measure we are able to use.

John the Baptist and Jesus manifested a new doctrine of God's dealing with man. As Jesus said, "Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see these things which ye see, and have not seen them." The prophets spoke of the glorious day of Salvation in which we live, when the Spirit would be poured out on all. Jesus said He stands at the door and knocks. He also said His words are Spirit and they are life. Today we have His words recorded in convenient form to study as often as we will. So the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which He has given. When asked about commandments, He gave two: The first a total devotion to God. The second to love our neighbors as ourselves. This second calls for a great effort in these evil times in which we live. The Christian has great responsibility. Hebrews 12:14 "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." So let us center our attention on the great commands.

—Ernest Wagner
Modesto, California

NEW ADDRESS

Thomas Royer

26354 C. R. 38
Goshen, Ind. 46526

HISTORICAL

HISTORY OF THE BIBLE: THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE

The title ascribes it to Jude the brother of James, and nowhere does the epistle claim to be by an apostle; on the contrary, verse 17 gives the impression that the author was not of the Twelve. The James who is mentioned can hardly be any other than James the brother of the Lord, one of the three pillars of the Jewish-Christian Church, while the Jude must be the Judas (Jude) of Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3, a son of Mary and therefore not an apostle. It is noticeable that neither Jude nor his brother James in their epistles claims other than a spiritual relationship to Christ ("servant of Jesus Christ"—and in a subordinate sense solely the mark of a becoming modesty). Between the epistles of James and of Jude there are many points of contact. The titles are so similar that the first verse of Jude seems a reminiscence of James 1:1; both lack personal greetings and each is meant for a wide circle of the Church and has the character of an encyclical (general letter to many places) though of the two the epistle of Jude seems to have the larger scope, not being directed to "the twelve tribes" (James 1:1) With this large circle of readers ("them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ") everything in the epistle agrees. The matters discussed are those in which the whole Church has interest; while the occasion might be local, the theme is general—salvation (verse 3). The epistle, like that of James, is directed against a form of worldliness which might arise either from Jewish or heathen surroundings, and may have in mind a developed form of antinomianism. Jude has also in mind actual moral depravity against which he gives warning...

—Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia.

In the New Testament Church there were two Judes: Judas, one of the Twelve Apostles (Luke 6:16), and Judas, the brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55). The latter is commonly regarded as the writer of this

Epistle.

Eusebius relates that Domitian, in his persecution of Christians, A.D. 96, looking up the heirs of the kingdom of David, ordered the arrest of the grandsons of Jude the brother of Jesus. They told the Emperor that they were farmers, and lived by the toil of their hands, and that Christ's kingdom was not a kingdom of this world, but would be manifested when He comes in glory at the end of the world to judge the living and dead.

The similarity of the situation to that mentioned in II Peter suggests the possibility that this epistle may have been addressed to the same churches, which it seems from II Peter 3:1, were the same as those to whom I Peter was addressed, which were in Asia Minor (I Peter 1:1). It was probably written about A.D. 67.

—Halley's Bible Handbook

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Old Brethren Church will be held this year, the Lord willing, on May 16, 17, and 18 at the meeting house near Wakarusa, Indiana. Friday will be council day; Saturday and Sunday (Pentecost) will be for public preaching; and Saturday evening will be for the Communion service. A hearty invitation is extended to all of our brethren, sisters, and friends to attend.

—Melvin Coning

BIRTHS

ROYER - A daughter, Laura Rose, born March 27 to Rex and Janice Royer of Nappanee, Indiana.

ROYER - A son, Craig Allen, born April 14 to Paul and Rose Royer of Goshen, Indiana.

YOUTH PAGE

JULITTA

About the year A.D. 304, during the persecutions of the cruel Roman emperor named Diocletian, a Christian widow named Julitta tried to escape persecution.

Julitta fled from her home town of Iconium in central Asia Minor to Seleucia to the south and from there to Taurus, another city in Asia Minor.

Her fleeing was of little use, for at Taurus the Roman authorities arrested her and her three-year-old son Quiricus. The ruler in Taurus, Alexander by name, had Julitta beaten with tough cowhides to persuade her to give up Christianity.

During the beating, Alexander tried to still the frightened boy, but Quiricus squirmed loose and ran to his mother. But Alexander caught him up again. This time Quiricus kicked and scratched the tyrant. In his rage, Alexander took the boy by one leg and pitched him down the stone stairs.

Poor Julitta, in her sorrow, addressed Alexander: "Thou needest not think that I am so timid as to be conquered by thy cruelties for the tearing of my body shall not intimidate me, nor the racking of my members move my spirit; neither shall the threats of the fire, nor death itself be able to separate me from the love of Christ. The greater the torments are with which you threaten me, the more acceptable they are to me; for I hope thereby the sooner to come to my dear son..."

At this, Alexander had the brave woman suspended from a stake. She was torn with iron combs, melted tar poured over her raw wounds. Lastly they chopped off her head.

We could repeat hundreds of similar stories of other martyrs throughout the Roman Empire. They willingly gave their life for the One who first gave His life for them.

—Adapted from Martyrs Mirror

From God's World—His Story by Roger L. Berry

CHILDREN'S PAGE

SONAR FOR SUCCESS

"Look! There's a bat!" someone shouted, and, sure enough: flying erratically over our heads was a brown bat. As we stood in the fading daylight we watched the strange air-mammal dart over the garden where we were standing, then above the pond, between the maple trees, and over a little stream. It zig-zagged with an amazing speed—amazing when we considered that a bat does not have good eyesight to see where it is going! How could it navigate so swiftly, if it did not use its eyes? And the answer to that question is another one of nature's wonderful miracles.

God created bats with a most astonishing sonar system—one believed by scientists to be a billion times more efficient and sensitive than any radar or sonar system built by man. As the tiny creatures fly they send out a stream of up to 200 ultrasonic beeps each second, and constantly use the echoes to tell when they are getting too close to a tree or electric wire, and to help them locate tiny insects. In one experiment bats flew around in a dark room, avoiding 28 hair-thin wires, even while 70 loudspeakers blared out beeps on the same frequency 2000 times louder!

Did you ever see a person wandering aimlessly in life, always bumping into trouble, unable to find food for happiness? God has also created a spiritual "sonar system" for us. The thoughts and words and deeds that continually stream out from our hearts bounce off other people and circumstances to tell us what and where we are. If we use God's wisdom to properly read the echoes and react to them, all will be well.

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

ONE STEP MORE

What though before me all is dark,
Why should I long to see?
If God gives light for one step more
'Tis quite enough for me.

I find each onward step I take,
The gloom clears from the next,
And though 'tis very dark beyond,
Why should I be perplexed?

If mercy veils my fate from me
Why should I murmuring go?
My present lot might harder be
Did I the future know.

With childish faith I'll walk along
My path while here I dwell,
And trust my future lot to Him
Who doeth all things well.

Thus step by step I'll travel on,
Not looking far before;
Trusting that I shall always have
Just light for one step more.

—Selected by Bertie Baker
from Spiritual Hymns

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TODAY'S CHRISTIAN BATTLEFIELDS

To meet the needs of our time! To be effectively used of God to counter the latest device of Satan! To be instant in season, out of season! How important it is! The battle changes, and what used to be a battlefield is today a peaceful "Flanders Field" scene of graves and crosses. Yesterday's struggles are in the past, and fresh ones fill their places today. But principles of right and wrong remain the same.

Three thousand years ago, the armies of Israel under the crafty general Joab faced a desperate army of Ammonites who had hired 33,000 Syrians to help them. The Ammonites had insulted David's messengers sent to offer sympathy and comfort on the occasion of the death of King Hanun's father. Thinking they were spies they "shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away." So the armies met, and Joab sensed a hard battle ahead. His strategy, no doubt, matched his reputation: "When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians: And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon. And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the Lord do that which seemeth him good." (II Samuel 10:9-12) Joab's army routed the Ammonites so thoroughly, even with more Syrian reinforcements, that "the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more."

We notice several features of this particular battle that make it like our spiritual struggle against the

special tactics of Satan of our time. The first is the condition of the enemy. Satan has made some bad choices and given high insults to the God of Heaven in exalting himself and mistreating God's servants. He has a multitude of hired mercenaries in the form of unbelievers, humanists, evolutionists, communists, etc. not to mention his host of fallen angels. We stand like Joab when he "saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind." Satan is also desperate because he knows his time is short; these last days display his vilest efforts.

The second feature is Joab's strategy. He divided the army into two companies with the agreement that they would help each other when help was needed. One outstanding difference in our situation today compared to former times, is our independence. This is not perhaps by design as much as by our environment. We are taught independence in every other area. In our businesses or jobs, the more independent we are, the more it seems to prove our success. We decide when to buy a car or a home, what kind, and how much to spend. We plan our own time, our meals and our going and coming. We would not want someone else to decide these things. But in our spiritual experience we are expected to help each other and to accept help. In fact, we are very much in need of each other's help., Many Scriptures speak of this? "Bear ye one another's burdens;" "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed;" "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." We know that we should depend on one another and help each other. But we find ourselves used to independence. And so Satan strikes in this very area tempting us to carry over the spirit of independence into the church and our spiritual lives.

I remember as a youth hearing an old elder emphasize that one man cannot represent the church. We are not separate little islands but part of a great host of believers past, present, and future.

While we each need help of our brethren when the battle gets hot and the enemy is strong, we must

realize that our help is also needed. We may sit around mourning that nobody understands or shares with us when what we need to know is that we could be helping someone else.

Contractors know that idle equipment means waste and loss. A truck or dozer must be kept running to pay for the huge investment. Similarly, each idle person (idle in the spiritual sense) represents waste and loss. We are called to fight the good fight of faith and to do it with our might.

Another feature of Joab's battle compared to ours is his dependence on the Lord. He said, "...the Lord do that which seemeth him good." This did not mean that Joab sat back and let the battle happen. He planned; he organized; he encouraged his men. But with it all, he knew that the Lord must give them success or they would lose the battle.

One of Satan's devices in these last days is division. It is true that there has always been division. Churches of the last few centuries have divided again and again. They seemed very critical of one another, competitive and particular about the details that distinguished them as denominations. Somehow, it seems that our generation has seen that division isn't always the best solution. And yet Satan is perhaps more divisive than ever. And so we suffer, clinging together knowing that our hope is not in dividing more, but in somehow drawing closer to one another and to all Christians.

The answer to this dilemma is that first commandment of our Saviour: "Love one another." But how we love is so important. Love doesn't overlook error but seeks to rescue and correct. Positive Christian love is unifying and without it, though we have all faith, knowledge and gifts, we are nothing. The temptation is to forsake this love, abandon one another and our duty, and go our own way and "do our own thing." And our very Christian fellowship and happiness is at stake.

Though we still have a divided denominational setting in the Christian church, may we lose the compet-

itive critical spirit of the past and seek to promote fellowship and success in all true Christians. William Law in The Power of the Spirit written in the early 1700's has this comment that seems to fit our time:

"...I cannot consider myself as belonging only to one society of Christians as distinct from all others. It would be as hurtful to me as any worldly partiality. And therefore as the corruptions and imperfections which some way or other are to be found in all churches hinder not my communion with that under which my lot is fallen, so neither do they hinder my being in full union and hearty fellowship with all that is Christian holy, and good in every other church division."

May we lean on our Lord Jesus and the power of His Spirit and win the latest battles with which Satan confronts us. —L.C.

REPORT ON BRAZIL

By the counsel of the Church, in response to a request from the members in Brazil for help to organize a Church district and hold a Love Feast, Brother Joseph Cover and Sister Carol, Brother Hollis Flora and Sister Charlotte journeyed to Rio Verde, Goias, Brazil, to assist in this work. Sister Elma Moss also travelled with us. Our plane flight from Miami, Florida, arrived in Brazil Thursday, April 3, and we returned to the U.S.A. April 17. Brother Russell Garber came a week later on April 10..

Regular worship services were held the first Sunday morning and evening and the following Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The yearly visit was paid to all the members in their homes and the visit Council and organization Council took place Friday evening. The Love Feast was on Sunday with morning worship service and the Communion in the evening.

The members in council selected Brother Wade Flora for their minister, and he was installed in the first degree of the ministry with his wife, Sister Violet. Brother Wade then expressed a need for an oversight elder and the Church unitedly agreed that they would

be happy to have Brother Joseph L. Cover for their presiding elder.

There are ten members in Brazil, eight of which attended the Communion. One sister was sick and one brother stayed away saying he was confused and needed time to get in a condition to commune acceptably.

We consider it a special blessing of God to have had the opportunity to meet and fellowship, to work and worship with the Brazilian members, and to see the beautiful and bountiful land that God has given them for their home on His earth. Their sincere Christian love and hospitality to us and their honest, humble desire to be united in the faith and practice of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is a real inspiration and cause for thanksgiving.

There are several family relatives and other friends who attend meeting, many of them young people. The members are very concerned about their families and their need for salvation and have asked us to remember them in prayer and to convey their greetings of Christian love to all the members in North America.

In the service of Christ and His Church,
—Hollis Flora

NOTE OF THANKS

In behalf of the brethren and sisters of the Rio Verde, Brazil District we want to express our love, appreciation, and thanks to all of our dear brethren and sisters in North America, for your support over the years and for recently sending brethren here to organize a district and officiate a Love Feast meeting for us. May our Father in heaven continue to be glorified and His Kingdom continue to grow.

—Wade Flora

We can praise our Heavenly Father that sorrows and disappointments are not meant to disfigure but to transform us.

Selected

CHRIST OUR LAW

Judaism made the Torah or Law its Christ. The Law was the central pivot of Judaism. The great teachers of the Hebrew nation declared that the Torah existed from the beginning. The Torah lay in God's bosom. It rested on God's knee. They declared that the Torah was the instrument by which God created the world. They believed that the Torah was his handmaid and his tool by which he set the bounds of the deep and assigned the function of the sun and the moon. A rabbinic author called the Torah God's firstborn by which he created the heaven and the earth. Another said that without the Torah the world falls. A rabbinic teacher declared that the Torah was the light for the world. Other rabbinic authorities referred to the Torah as the light which lights every man, the fountain of life, the giver of life.

Lest we ridicule the rabbis, we must remember that the radical importance which they gave to the Torah did not merely embrace the rules and precepts for living found in the five books of Moses. The Torah included the entire Old Testament Scriptures (see John 10:34), and especially the record of God's saving deeds for Israel in the Exodus and throughout their history. Furthermore, the Old Testament itself exalted the importance of the Torah.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. (Psalm 1:2) The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Psalm 119 is preeminently a psalm in praise of the Torah. In this psalm the two words "law" and "word"

are frequently used interchangeably. Thus, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." (Ps. 119:165), and, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Ps. 119:11). In Psalm 119 the Torah or the Law is made synonymous with the word of God. It is likened to food, to meat and drink, to wealth. It is called the wisdom of God. It is equated with light and life and salvation.

In Proverbs 8 the Torah or Law is called wisdom which "the Lord possessed...in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." (Prov. 8:22).

It seems, therefore, that Judaism had some basis for praising the Law. Nevertheless, while Judaism made the Law its Christ, the New Testament makes Christ its law. Throughout the New Testament, Christ is presented not only as the new exodus, the manifestation of God's saving deed, but also as the new norm for the life of God's people. The apostle John, for example, takes all the titles of honor and exaltation that Judaism had bestowed on the Law and transfers them to the person of Jesus Christ.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1:1-4)
"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18) "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1:9)

John takes the honor which Judaism had bestowed on the Torah and transfers it to Jesus Christ. The true Word, the true Light, the true Fountain of Life, the true Agent by which God made the world was not the old Torah. The old Torah was only a shadow pointing toward the true and living Torah of God. In the New Testament it is clear that God's Torah is the person of Jesus Christ. Throughout the Gospel of John the apostle takes those titles which Judaism had ascribed to the Law and ascribes them to Jesus Christ. Thus:

"I am the bread of life." (John 6:35) "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." (John 7:37) "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12) "I am the good shepherd:" (John 10:11) "I am the way, the truth, and the life:" (John 14:6)

Scholars have shown that the expressions bread, water, life, light, way, truth and life, which Judaism had ascribed to the Law, were transferred by John to the person of Jesus Christ. In a similar manner, other New Testament writers move the Law from its central position in Judaism and make the very person of Jesus Christ the center of the New Testament. This is the theme of Matthew. Matthew presents the infant Jesus as the new Moses who escapes the wrath of Herod, just as the infant Moses escaped the wrath of Pharaoh. Like Moses, Jesus comes out of Egypt. He passes through the waters of baptism as Moses and Israel had done. Then Matthew presents the Sermon on the Mount as the counterpart of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. Here it is not the authority of Moses but the authority of Jesus Christ which is given final authority.

In the old times Moses said, "'Do not murder...'" But I (the new Moses) tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment" (Matt. 5:21,22; cf. Exod. 20:13). Moses said, "'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'" But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to commit adultery." (Matt. 5:31,32; cf. Deut. 24:1). The old Torah declared, "'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'" But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Matt. 5:38,39; cf. Exod. 21:24 NIV)

The rabbis called the Torah or the Law a yoke, and, indeed, it became a yoke that Peter declared "neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear" (Acts 15:10). Our Lord therefore gave the great invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will

give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." (Matthew 11:28,29) This yoke is the very person of Christ himself.

To Be Continued

By Robert D. Brinsmead From Verdict Report

Selected by Kenneth Garber

OBITUARY

NATHAN DAVID ROYER, son of Roscho and Susan Royer, was born in Dallas County Iowa, May 29, 1909. On May 3, 1986, he passed away in the same house in which he was born and spent his entire life of 76 years, 11 months, and 4 days.

He was united in marriage to Grace Moss on September 21, 1933. She preceded him in death on August 4, 1948. He is survived by Gerald and Lois Royer of Dallas Center, Iowa; Mary Ellen Chupp and husband Alvin, also of Dallas Center; and Elden and wife Judy of Adel, Iowa. His life was spent farming as long as his health permitted.

In 1940 he joined the Dunkard Brethren Church. He served as a deacon and treasurer for many years.

Besides his children he leaves one sister, Anna Mary Winger of Grants Pass, Oregon, nine grandchildren: Dan Chupp of Quinter, Kansas; Don, Cynthia, Laura, Brian, and Ryan Chupp of Dallas Center, Iowa; Brenda, Anthony and Duane Royer of Adel, Iowa; and two great grandchildren: Justin and Tiffany Chupp of Quinter, Kansas.

Services were held at the Dunkard Brethren Church, Dallas Center, Iowa on May 6. Bro. Fred Pifer officiated with Bro. Joseph Flora and Bro. Ray Reed assisting. Burial was in the Brethren Cemetery.

SAFELY HOME

I am home in Heaven, dear ones;
All's so happy, all's so bright!
There's perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.

All the pain and grief are over,
Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever,
Safely home in Heaven at last.

Did you wonder I so calmly
Trode the Valley of the Shade?
Oh! but Jesus' love illumined
Every dark and fearful glade.

And He came Himself to meet me
In that way so hard to tread;
And with Jesus' arm to lean on,
Could I have one doubt or dread?

Then you must not grieve so sorely,
For I love you dearly still;
Try to look beyond earth's shadows,
Pray to trust our Father's will.

There is work still waiting for you,
So you must not idle stand;
Do your work while life remaineth—
You shall rest in Jesus' land.

When that work is all completed,
He will gently call you home;
Oh, the rapture of the meeting!
Oh, the joy to see you come!

MEDITATION: OUR TONGUES

Psalm 139:4: "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, Lo, O Lord thou knowest it altogether." The words that rise in our tongues come from our hearts. Even if we are unable to speak we feel the impulse. Apostle James tells us no man is able to control his tongue, so the control has to be in the heart. Jesus said by our words we will be justified or condemned. So it is very necessary to let His word be our delight, and control our thoughts.

—Ernest Wagner, Modesto, Ca.

HISTORICAL

HISTORY OF THE BIBLE: REVELATION

The Revelation or Apocalypse was a direct revelation of God to the Apostle John. It was given partly by Jesus Christ who appeared in glory to John when He spoke messages to the seven churches of Asia. John was instructed to write his visions and send them to the churches. "...What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." (1:1) Much of the rest of the book was given by angels as spoken messages or vivid pictures shown to John. Some of the things he saw he was not to record.

John was banished to the Isle of Patmos in the Mediterranean off the coast of Asia Minor as he said in 1:9: "I John, who also am your companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Halley writes, "This according to Apostolic tradition, was in the persecution of Domitian, about A.D. 95. The next year, A.D. 96, John was released, and permitted to return to Ephesus. The use of the past tense, "was" in Patmos, seems to indicate that, while he saw the visions in Patmos, it was after his release and return to Ephesus, that he wrote the book, about A.D. 96. (Halley's Bible Handbook p. 683, 684)

This book of Revelation amplifies and explains further Jesus' discourse given in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. It speaks of hope and victory for the Church of Jesus Christ. What untold comfort and encouragement this message of overcoming must have been to the martyrs and persecuted ones of past ages! May it be encouragement also to us. We may not understand everything told, but we certainly can catch the note of victory for God's people and the vanquishing of the host of Satan for eternity. —L.C.

(This concludes our History of the Bible series.)

EMBLEMS OF CHRIST

"I am the Bread of Life." John 6:35
He is compared to wine or bread:
Dear Lord, our souls must thus be fed;
That flesh, that dying blood of Thine
Is Bread of Life, is heavenly Wine.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches," John 15:5
Is He a vine? His heavenly root
Supplies the branches with life and food,
Oh, let a lasting union join
My soul—a branch—to Christ the vine.

Paul says He is "a Rock." I Cor. 10:4
Is He a Rock? How firm He proves!
The "Rock of Ages" never moves,
Yet the sweet streams that from Him flow,
Attend us all the desert through.

"I am the way." John 14:6
Is He a Way? He leads to God,
The path is drawn with lines of blood.
There would I walk with hope and zeal,
Till I arrive at Zion's Hill.

"I am the door, by me, if any man enter
in he shall be saved, and shall go in
and out and find pasture." John 10:9
Is He a Door? I'll enter in.
Behold the pasture large and green,
A paradise divine and fair,
None but the sheep have access there.

"Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner
stone." I Peter 2:6
Is He designed a Corner Stone
For men to build their faith upon?
I'll make Him my foundation too;
Nor fear the plots of hell below.

"I am the bright, the morning star."

Rev. 22:16

Is He a Star? He breaks the night;
Piercing the shades to dawning light:
I see His glories from afar,
He is the bright, the morning Star.

—Selected by Emanuel and Catherine Garber

NEW DISTRICT

The members of the Eastern District of the Old Brethren assembled in council on Friday, May 16, 1986, and decided to establish two congregations from the original one: one near Bradford, Ohio, and one near Wakarusa, Indiana. May the Lord bless each congregation to grow in numbers and true piety.

—Melvin Coning

BAPTISM

On Tuesday, May 20, we rejoiced with the angels of heaven when Linda Wagner was taken into church fellowship by Christian baptism near Dayton, Ohio. May she be faithful unto eternal life.

—Hollis Flora

BIRTH

ROYER - A daughter, Honna Leanne, born May 21 to Tim and Linda Royer of Goshen, Indiana.

LOST, BUT WON

I was lost in doubt and fear,
And it cost a sigh and tear.

I was won to faith and peace:
God the Son bought my release.

Selected by Susie Wagner

FOR YOUTH

WHICH?

Just see how short this candle is,
This candle that I hold.
It represents a man who found
The Lord when he was old.
And though his light is shining now
And bright beyond a doubt,
He hasn't much to give because
His light will soon go out.

This candle that I have will
Burn much longer than the other.
I love its glowing light, don't you?
It represents a mother.
She found the Lord in middle age;
Her children were all grown.
If only she had known the Lord
When they were still at home!

This candle is a large one;
It represents a youth
Who gave his heart to God
And walks the path of right and truth.
His light can shine out long and bright
With many trophies won,
With more to give because
He found the Lord when he was young.

Which candle do you want to be?
The short one or the tall?
The voice of Jesus calls to you
Come now; give Christ your all.

—Selected by Everett Oyler

To the Israelites, Goliath is "too big to hit;"
but to little David, he is "too big to miss."

—Selected

CHILDREN'S PAGE

ONLY A SHELL

I stood beside the big maple tree on Grandpa's farm and stared with amazement at the strange object I had spied clinging to its rough bark. As curious as a little country boy could be, I stretched tall to reach it, and tugged it loose. It seemed even stranger in my hand: a thin transparent golden shell with the huge shape of a goggle-eyed insect, split open up its back.

And it was so brittle. How could the insect which had once lived in this strange shell possibly have climbed out and left the shell so perfect—each tiny leg was evident in the shapes of the shell. How could the creature, whatever it was, have pulled its six legs out of this dark plastic coating without splitting it? How could it have climbed out the slit in the shell's back? How could it have left the shape of its eyes, its feet, and its body behind—completely joined together?

Years passed. No longer a little country boy, but now a grown man, I stood quietly beside a coffin and looked with grief and joy and wonder at the object inside. In almost every way it looked like Grandpa. The shape of the head, the noble face that had once talked to me of God, the hands and arms hanging beside the body—how very much they appeared to be as they had been when I had walked with that person around the farm. But I knew I was only seeing a shell. The real person I called Grandpa was gone. Like the cicada, the time for change had come. As I marveled at life and its leaving, I was again but a little boy, in the presence of a wonderful miracle of God.

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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THE PILGRIM

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THE PILGRIM

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NO. 7

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

BROKENNESS

Exquisite, beautifully carved;
The alabaster box.
A rich perfume, costly and rare
Within its depth it locks.

A woman bears it carefully,
Until at Jesus' feet,
She breaks it, and the air is filled
With scent so rich and sweet.

Broken and useless now it seems.
Ah! no; consider, see
For this intent it was designed;
A poignant mystery.

—Miriam J. Sauder
Lancaster, Penna.

UNITED AGAINST SIN

Little Musky the musk ox calf ran bawling to his shaggy mother. He had sensed danger and had caught sight of several gray forms lurking nearby. Now the whole herd realized that wolves were sneaking close hoping to single out a calf they could kill and feast on.

Musk oxen are smelly beasts more like goats than cows, but much larger. Their horns are broad, curving down beside their heads, then out into sharp points. Their fur is thick for they inhabit the northland of Greenland and North America.

Musk oxen are swift runners but when danger threatens they do not run away. Musky and the other calves were quickly herded into the center of the herd. Then the adult oxen turned to face the menacing wolves. With their heads out and their unprotected hind quarters toward the center of the circle, they presented to the wolves a united front of formidable horns and dashing hooves. The young were kept inside the ring in safety. The wolves had to give up and go away hungry.

Though Musky is not real, the picture is true of musk oxen. These beasts, created by God, are given a herd instinct that allows them to survive in the most severe conditions. Alone they would soon perish.

God gives us many lessons in nature. Jesus says we are His sheep and He is our good Shepherd. But these creatures of the wild have no shepherd. God takes care of them by giving them instincts that enable them to survive. We are to be harmless as doves and wise as serpents. Sheep are not too wise—in fact they are stupid and need a shepherd. We also need our Shepherd. But we need each other and we need to help one another.

Satan is our enemy and he uses the temptations and weaknesses of man to his advantage. Alone we are easy

targets for his tricks. He is sneaky like a wolf. But we can take a lesson from this shaggy creature of the northland. Together and helping one another we can resist the enemy. James 4:7 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

I like the picture of the young in the center of the ring of defense. Our homes, schools, and congregations should all have the protection of the children and youth as a goal and purpose. The wolves waiting to devour give a picture of sin and its effect on young people.

The ravages of sin seem also like the disease of cancer. We recently lost a friend to this disease. He went down quickly—in less than a year. For some it is even faster. We are told that one can have a malignant tumor for years and not know it. But when this tumor begins to shed abnormal cells and spread to vital organs, then its effects are felt, and it is usually too late to have complete healing.

Sin is sneaky and so is its author. It can appear so harmless and can be indulged in for years without too much apparent harm. But if it is present, it is like the malignant tumor; sooner or later it will show, begin to spread, and its effects will be felt. Unless something is done it will soon be too late.

Consider the results of immoral behaviour, rebellion against authority, drug abuse, stealing, lying, swearing, time wasting, and worldliness in general. These are all progressive, habit forming, and leading to death. In their early stages of indulgence, they may all seem fairly harmless. But as they progress, they reveal their true form and begin to ravage the body, mind, and character.

Early training and loving discipline are the best defense. They are the ring of horns against the enemy, and how diligent we parents should be to use them! There is no substitute, no second chance. The enemy is waiting to devour all he can isolate from this protection. To wait until the "wild oats" are sown and presume that the mercy of God will make up for our

neglect is risky.

Certainly, God's mercy is great, and Jesus has power to forgive sins. He demonstrated this when He told the palsied man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," The onlookers were quick to charge Jesus with blasphemy. But He went on to say "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" Jesus healed the man and thereby proved His power in both areas.

If we had opportunity to prevent cancer in our children and loved ones, we would do it unhesitatingly. The world of medical science is searching desperately for such a prevention or a cure. With the cancer of sin, we have opportunity to give immunity and prevention in our children through loving teaching and training. This is not to say the children cannot make wrong choices even with good training. But by God's grace and mercy and the care of our good Shepherd, we can unitedly face a foe that is plotting our destruction and defeat. May we like the creatures of the north-land, band together and help one another to victory.

—L.C.

MEDITATION: OUR BRAINS

Each of us is born with a marvelous and very delicate control system to handle our body functions and also to govern our spiritual needs. We are able to form a visionary picture of things we read and see. If we are farmers we need to have a hope and vision of harvest to inspire us to sow. We need to have that hope and inspiration we find in God's word to cause us to look ahead to the great reward promised. We should not allow ourselves to seek to use false means to control our brains and thoughts, such as alcohol, drugs, medicines, or vain ideas to hinder our mental ability. In the Old Scriptures we see the consequences of obeying or disobeying God's Word. The New Covenant requires a new life controlled by love, mercy, and peace in our hearts and thoughts. —Ernest Wagner, Modesto, Calif.

"FOR A MAN'S LIFE CONSISTETH NOT IN THE
ABUNDANCE OF THE THINGS WHICH HE POSSESSETH."

Where we do our banking there is a sign that says, "Save today for a worry free future." In the world today, it seems the highest desire is to have a big bank account. We see signs that say, "I love money," or "Think money." When we see people that have this outlook on life, they themselves are one big sign that says, "I love not God." "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6:24)

Each one of us, as we go through life has either an earthly treasure or an heavenly. One question I ask myself is, "What are my treasures?" If someone finds a valued treasure, he will guard it and keep close contact to it. We can all have the greatest treasure that there is: God's only Son. Do we guard this treasure as we should? Or maybe, like myself, we get careless. As long as we are in this life we have to make a living, so we need a certain amount of money. Therefore the bank is the safest place to keep it until it is needed to pay our bills. Once a month we get a statement from the bank telling us where we stand. Once in a while we find a mistake, and we are anxious to get it cleared up. My question is, "Are we as anxious to clear up our shortcomings with God, as we are with our bank account?"

The Bible says, "The love of money is the root of all evil." If we love something we will go to any extent to achieve it. In Luke 16 we read of the rich man that fared sumptuously every day. I am sure he didn't have signs posted on his gate post saying, "I love money." But we can tell by his attitude, he surely did love money. He couldn't even give the crumbs that fell from his table, to a poor beggar. The rich man died and was buried—final—just buried. Lazarus died and was carried to Abraham's bosom. As we read the final account, we can see that the rich man was doing the begging, and Lazarus was faring sump-

tuously. It will always be that God's children will have the "worry free future."

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

—Everett Oyler

New Paris, Indiana

SOME THOUGHTS ON LOVING OUR BROTHER

If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? Do we respect our brother's feelings about things? Paul said he would not eat meat while the world stands if it would cause his brother to offend. Do we love our brother enough to sacrifice for him in time, labor, forbearance or whatever? The Lord is interceding for me at the right hand of God every day for my shortcomings, so I can surely bear with my brother if this is needed. Are we glad to have brethren and sisters in the Church to associate with, who have so many qualities that we can appreciate and profit by, or are we so critical of our different views on a few things that it spoils our relationship? What would it be like to not have brethren and sisters to have a close fellowship with? If my brethren can put up with me with all my faults, it would certainly be too bad if I couldn't appreciate them without reforming them to my views on everything. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3:17) The history of the peace churches is fraught with divisions—division because people couldn't get along with each other. Too often people think they need to condemn or reform another's position, but if we would simply and humbly just state our views and let it rest there, and be sure we live a quiet and consistent life ourselves we might be surprised at how much better we would feel about things, and how much better the result. Do we love our neighbors as ourselves? These are just

some things I think about when I think of loving God
and our neighbor (brother) as ourselves.

—Tim Royer
Goshen, Indiana

PRECIOUS GIFT

Rocking my baby,
So pleasant, so sweet;
Away from life's toils,
A blessed retreat.

Rocking my baby
(So precious this time)
How do I use it—
This gift so sublime?

Is it a time to
Be quiet, to pray?
Or is it disturbed
By thoughts of the day?

Do I sing praises
And give thanks above?
Do I pray others
Will see His great love?

Rocking my baby
(A gift, that is sure)
A time for renewal,
To make thoughts more pure.

Rocking my baby,
Unspeakable joy;
A way to touch Heaven,
With my little boy.

—Dedicated to Joshua
Susan Harper

CHRIST OUR LAW

(continued from last issue)

When Jesus gave His great commission to His disciples, He declared, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:" (Matt. 28:19,20)

The authority of the very person of Christ, who is the Word incarnate, who is the Will of God incarnate, not only fulfills but supersedes and replaces the teacher of the old dispensation. In the person of Christ the New Testament witnesses the fulfillment of Moses' own prophecy, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee," (Deut. 18:18)

Throughout the rest of the Gospels there is a continual presentation of the conflict between the Pharisees, who came armed with the authority of the Law, and the person of Christ, who spoke with the full authority of the Father. The theme of the Gospels is that the authority of the Torah is superseded by the authority of Jesus Himself—whose authority is above the Law and above the sabbath.

The book of Hebrews begins by showing that the revelation of God given by the Law and the prophets in the Old Testament has been superseded by God's final revelation given in the person of His Son.

This also is the theme of the apostle Paul. The force of his words in Colossians should be considered in light of Judaism's claim that the world was made by and for the sake of the Law, which was God's firstborn.

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist...who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead;" (Col. 1:15-18)

Again in Galatians the apostle declares that the Law was introduced 430 years after the promise was given to

Abraham. "It (the Law) was added... till the seed (Jesus Christ)...should come." (Gal. 3:19) Then Paul declares that the Law, the old Torah, was our custodian, our guardian, boyleader, babysitter, until Christ. But now that Christ has come, now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the Law. The Great Teacher not only fulfills it; he replaces it, he supplants it. Therefore Paul can say, "If ye be led by the Spirit (that is, the Spirit of Christ; if Christ has now become your Leader, if you now live under the lordship of Christ), ye are not under the law." (Gal. 5:18)

Whereas in Judaism the Law was central, in the New Testament witness Christ is central. He takes the position formerly occupied by the Law. The message of the New Testament is that the revelation of God given in the person of Jesus Christ has superseded the revelation of God given in the Torah. This also means that the Decalogue is no longer the supreme revelation of the will of God. It too has been superseded by that supreme revelation given in the person of Christ. When we think of the different titles of honor and exaltation such as Word, Life, Light, Bread, Shepherd, Way, Truth and Life that have been bestowed upon Jesus Christ, there is one comprehensive concept that unites and summarizes all of them. To the New Testament community Jesus Christ is God's living Torah. He is the Word. He is God's Law made flesh. It is strange that we can call Christ our Shepherd, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, and yet fail to recognize that he is in person the Law of God. God's word is law, and since Jesus is the Word of God, He is the Law of God. The early Christians, like Judaism, used the words "word" (logos) and "law" (nomos) interchangeably.

One early Christian, writing about A.D. 100, likened Jesus Christ to a great tree and said that this great tree is the Law of God—who is none other than the Son of God. Justin Martyr, one of the greatest figures of the second century, declared in his Dialogue with Trypho a Jew that the Law given on Mount Sinai has been super-

seded by a final law, a great law. And then he declared that this law is Christ Himself.

Whereas Judaism made the Law its Christ, the New Testament makes Christ its law. This has profound implications. It means that, to be true Christians, Christ is to become everything to us. It means that we are to confess that Jesus Christ is not only our salvation, our saving event, but that Jesus Christ is our Shepherd, our Guide, our Rule of Life. We must have no synthesis of New Testament grace and Mosaic ethics—as though we come to Christ for salvation and then return to Moses to learn how we ought to live. That only ascribes to Christ half the glory that belongs to Him. We thereby confess that Jesus is able to forgive and to save us but that somehow the light of Christ is unable to guide us in the way of life.

It is a fact that Jesus nowhere exhorts his disciples to study the Law except to find in it a testimony to his work. Nor does the apostle Paul use the Law in general or the Decalogue in particular as if it were the great rule of life for Christians. Rather, Paul always sets before us the person and the work of Christ. He reasons from the fact of Christ and the revelation of God in Christ to the way we ought to behave as Christians. To be truly Christian our behavior must be determined by Christ. When Paul appeals to believers to live before one another in deference and in humility, he does not appeal to the written code. He presents the Christ. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but...he humbled himself." (Phil. 2:5-8)

When Paul exhorted the Corinthian believers to be generous in giving and helping the poor saints at Jerusalem, he did not cite the Law, the old Torah, as the rule of life, but rather the new law—even Christ Himself. The apostle says, "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (II Cor. 8:9)

And when Paul tells the Ephesians about behavior that is to be avoided, he makes clear that our conduct is not

determined by the old written code but by Jesus Christ. "If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:" (Eph. 4:21)

In Judaism holiness was defined in terms of conformity to the Law, the Torah, the written code. In the New Testament, holiness is defined in terms of conformity to the person of Christ. Thus, the apostle declares that we have been "predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29) The great norm and rule of life in the New Testament is not conformity to the written code but conformity to the very person of Christ, the Word of God. He is the Law of God, the Will of God incarnate.

Whereas Judaism made the Law its Christ, the New Testament makes Christ its law. He is both saving event and rule of life. Let no one call this anti-nomianism. A Christian is one who lives by and under the authority of the Christ. From beginning to end the New Testament declares that Christ himself is the eternal, unchanging Law of God. This is not relativism, nor subjectivism, nor situationism, nor mysticism. To confess that Jesus Christ has become God's new, living Torah, both our salvation and our rule of life, our Shepherd, our Guide, our Way, our Truth, our Life, is indeed the theme of apostolic Christianity.

by Robert D. Brinsmead From Verdict Report
Selected by Kenneth Garber

SUMMER AMUSEMENTS

Amusement is big business in America. More than ever the people of our society want to be amused. They want excitement and thrills. They want to have their minds diverted from the cares and responsibilities of the present by whatever pleasant means they can find. Some of their amusements seem innocent enough, but this amusement seeking has further implications. An old dictionary of English synonyms explains these implications well: "Whatever amuses serves to kill time,

to lull the faculties, and banish reflection."

The prince of this world does not want his subjects to think. That would not be to his best interests. Serious, reflective thinking would endanger his control over them. Hence, he does all he can to keep his victims' minds diverted from the true issues of life.

Modern technology has provided many devices to help him accomplish his purposes. With the invention of the radio and television, he gained a powerful tool that amuses listeners for hours, keeping their minds diverted from profitable reflection. Through rock music and drugs, Satan can render a person practically powerless to exercise his own mind. Modern writings, and especially many books written for children, engulf the reader in a world of fantasy and foolishness, again preventing serious thinking. Further, our electronic age has brought forth games and devices with almost unbelievable power to captivate the mind. Players of these are drawn deeply into the action; their minds are fully occupied by the games before them. Present-day recreational equipment adds to the mind-stunting atmosphere of our society. Ripping and tearing around on a dirt bike or a three-wheeler does not help develop responsible thinking.

The amusements of our day have produced a nonthinking society. This society is a captivated society. They have developed an addiction to the diverting and confusing bait fed them by their master. They are slaves who can no longer make their own decisions.

Today's nonthinking society is a selfish society. People are determined to fulfill their personal pleasures; they do not consider cost or consequences; they do not evaluate the means to their end. Self-satisfaction is their supreme god.

This nonthinking society is an irresponsible society. Diverted minds have not been trained to face reality. Tickled minds have not learned the discipline of productive thought. The pleasure of the moment is the most important consideration.

Today's nonthinking society is a lost society.

Every accountable soul must ponder the path of his feet and understand his condition before he will be moved to confess and repent. God's children have their senses exercised to discern good and evil as they meditate on His Word. Nonthinkers cannot be Christians.

In this decadent society we must maintain the ability to think and reason. We must withdraw ourselves from the headlong rush of society, not running with them to the same excess of riot. By the grace of God, we must help our children to grow up as thinkers in this nonthinking age. This will only be possible as we discern the devil's snares and avoid them.

Let us use this summer to direct our children into responsible thinking. We can begin by placing upon them the discipline of work. They need to develop diligence that does not shun responsibility. Let us strive to increase family togetherness. Christian family life produces a satisfaction that does not veer for diversion. We must provide our children with wholesome spare-time activities. The mind-building games, upbuilding reading, and simple toys and activities are still the best. Even though they lack the powerful appeal of many modern amusements, they produce a satisfying fruit that far supersedes their counterparts. Our children should learn to love a sober, peaceful, pensive way of life.

Many of the world's modern recreational pursuits, electronic games, music, and so forth, are extremely captivating. By contrast, the Spirit of God speaks in a still, small voice. If we allow our children to be caught up in a dazzle of worldly amusements, can we expect them to hear when God calls?

—Ernest D. Wine

Selected from The Christian School Builder

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HISTORICAL: SUMMARY OF THE INQUISITION

Of the multitudes who perished by the Inquisition throughout the world, no authentic record is now discoverable. But wherever popery had power, there was the tribunal. It had been planted even in the east, and the Portuguese Inquisition of Goa was, until within these few years, fed with many an agony. South America was partitioned into provinces of the Inquisition... The Netherlands were one scene of slaughter from the time of the decree which planted the Inquisition among them. In Spain...each of the seventeen tribunals during a long period burned annually, on an average, ten miserable beings! ...This number was in a country where persecution had for ages abolished all religious differences, and where the difficulty was not to find the stake, but the offering. Yet, even in Spain, thus gleaned of all heresy, the Inquisition could still swell its lists of murders to thirty-two thousand! The numbers burned in effigy, or condemned to penance, punishments generally equivalent to exile, confiscation, and taint of blood, to all ruin but the mere loss of worthless life, amounted to three hundred and nine thousand. But the crowds who perished in dungeons of torture, of confinement, and of broken hearts, the millions of dependent lives made utterly helpless, or hurried to the grave by the death of the victims, are beyond all register; or recorded only before Him, who has sworn that "He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword."

In the thirteenth century, the popedom was at the summit of mortal dominion; it was independent of all kingdoms; it ruled with a rank of influence never before possessed by a human scepter; to all earthly intents its power was immeasurable for good or evil. It might have spread peace, freedom, and Christianity to the ends of the world. But its nature was hostile; and, to the shame of human reason, Rome, in the hour of its grandeur, teemed with the monstrous and horrid birth of the inquisition!

—From Fox's Book of Martyrs

FOR YOUTH

THE POWER OF GOD

The power of God is unmeasurable and unfathomable. Our human minds are not capable of understanding or measuring His power, but we can see and feel His power even though we cannot completely comprehend it.

We see the power of God in the past. In the Old Testament we read that God destroyed the earth with a flood but spared Noah. Under the Law, God miraculously defeated the armies that came against Israel as long as Israel was faithful. He proved His power and superiority through the prophets. The supreme example of God's power was in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Today we see the power of God in a slightly different way. Although we know God could still send fire from heaven or raise a dead man to life we very rarely see it. But today what shows more of God's power than a changed life? A life that was bound by sin is now free to return good for evil and love for hate. We can feel God's Holy Spirit as He gives us His power to resist temptations and grace to overcome.

We know that God's power will last into the future. We don't need to fear the future because we know that He will give us the power to meet whatever trials will come and the wisdom and strength for every duty we must perform. In the end we will see His power when Satan is bound and we experience the miracle of perfection.

—Ina Cover
Tuolumne, California

The power of God we see on high
When the lightning rends the sky.
His power made old Sinai smoke
When He the law to Israel spoke.

Now under grace God's power is shown
Changing lives by Jesus known;
Binding Satan and freeing men
From the bondage of hate and sin. —L.C.

CHILDREN'S PAGE

MIRACLES MULTIPLIED

How many clouds are in the sky?
How many birds go soaring by?
How many creatures live and roam
On this big ball we call our home?

And in the sea which never stops
Are how many sparkling waterdrops?
And on the seashore—if you can—
Count for me the grains of sand!

How many leaves, do you suppose,
Go whisp'ring when the soft wind blows?
And in the countryside we pass
Are how many blades of soft green grass?

How many flowers—don't miss one—
Grow everywhere beneath the sun?
And how many other lovely things
Make earth a wonderplace for kings?

How many distant specks of light
Glow in the starry sky at night?
And how many night songs serenade
Us in the world our God has made?

How many people, far and near,
Rejoice that God has put them here—
And how many children, great and small,
Will love the One who made it all?

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

JESUS, THY BOUNDLESS LOVE TO ME

Jesus, Thy boundless love to me
No thought can reach, no tongue declare;
Unite my thankful heart to Thee,
And reign without a rival there.
Thine wholly, Thine alone I am;
My soul with constant love aflame.

Thy love, how cheering is its ray!
All pain before its presence flies;
Care, anguish, sorrow melt away,
Where'er its healing beams arise:
O Jesus, nothing may I see,
Nothing desire or seek but Thee.

O draw me, Saviour, after Thee!
So shall I run and never tire.
With gracious words still comfort me;
Be Thou my hope, my sole desire.
Free me from every weight: nor fear
Nor sin can come, if Thou art here.

Still let Thy love point out my way;
How wondrous things Thy love hath wrought;
Still lead me, lest I go astray;
Direct my work, inspire my thought;
And if I fall, soon may I hear
Thy voice, and know that love is near,

In suffering be Thy love my peace,
In weakness be Thy love my power;
And when the storms of life shall cease,
Jesus, in that important hour,
In death as life be Thou my guide,
And save me, who for me hast died. (See Page 4)

FRIENDSHIP

I am convinced that we use the term too lightly. We sometimes refer to a person with whom we have only a slight acquaintance and no real relationship that he is "just a friend." To be a friend or to have a friend is not only a large and joyful privilege, but it carries a heavy responsibility. A friend is not an enemy. There is no middle ground. We may have close friends, but we do not have "half-friends." We are either committed to one another and to the Lord or we are in the opposite category.

Abraham was called the Friend of God. (See James 2:23, and II Chronicles 20:7) He acquired this title by his obedience and absolute faith and trust in God. He passed the test. He became the father of the faithful as Paul says in Galatians 3:7, "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." What a pilgrimage Abraham made! He left his native Chaldea and travelled as a pilgrim to Canaan and even Egypt. He also left, at God's command, the idolatry of his fathers and placed complete trust in the ability of God to lead him. We can be friends of God, too, but it will take a similar commitment in our lives.

Friends must harmonize. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" God asked this of His people regarding their relationship to Him. (Amos 3:3) Jesus said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." (John 15:14) This might seem like a servant status, but Jesus told them the same time, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. "This defines another quality of friendship:

Friends confide. The Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do...?" This was regarding

the destruction of Sodom. God did tell Abraham, and he pleaded that God would spare them. We see close friendship here. We need friends to confide in. A friend will listen and sympathize and give counsel.

Friends must be dependable. Proverbs 18:24: "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." We have heard that this refers to Jesus. He is our best Friend and closer than any family relative. But it also points out the way friends on earth relate to one another. Brothers relate because of being born in the same family. Friends are what they are because of love and mutual interest. Brothers can and should be friends. But the writer here seems to indicate that friendship transcends the family bond. Friendship is a closer relationship than blood relationship. A friend must be dependable. He "sticketh close." As we might say, a man "sticks up" for his friend. He defends him and refuses to betray him even when others do.

Friends can speak plainly to one another, as Paul recommends, "Speak the truth in love." "Faithful are the wounds of a friend..." (Proverbs 27:6) This surely means that a friend can say and do things in a manner not malicious but with the purpose of helping. If we are criticized by a friend we can take it and learn from it. If we have friends like this we are blessed indeed.

Jesus was betrayed by a friend; Judas, who should have been faithful and dependable, gave Him into the hand of His enemies. We are shocked at the treachery of Judas. But we too have opportunity to either stand up for Jesus or let Him down. And we can either be faithful to our friends or become their betrayers. We sing "I'll be a friend to Jesus..." But Jesus says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:40)

Friendship means faithfulness, whether it be to God or to one another. Proverbs 17:17 says, "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adver-

sity." In our communion service we hear the whispered resolve, "Let's be faithful." May we always be faithful to one another as friends and to our Heavenly Father, our best Friend. "What a Friend We Have in Jesus!" —L.C.

MEDITATIONS

FROM DARK TO GLORY

As we study the Word of God, we see that God created all things for His own pleasure and praise. The earth was dark and void until God said, "Let there be light." In John's gospel we read, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John the Baptist came to call men back to the Light. Jesus came with the Gospel to make it grow brighter for man to follow. The new birth was a great step forward. Our lives here should be an advance to Glory. Jesus said if we believe in Him we will not see death, but He was not speaking of our bodies. Jesus said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His Glory. So we should consider death as a needed step toward that glorious day when we are gathered home to our Heavenly Father. This world is the place to choose the darkness of sin, or the light of Glory. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked but He suffers wicked men to live, to give us a choice. We see examples in Pharoah, Herod, Judas, and others in the record. So let us choose Truth and live.

—Ernest Wagner
Modesto, California

Jesus, my Saviour, and my God,
Thou hast redeemed me with Thy blood;
By ties both natural and divine,
I am, and ever will be Thine.

Samuel Stennet

Our cover poem was written by Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) and translated by John Wesley.

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

"Evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." With all the ways of spreading word today, whether true or false, requires us not to ignore God's Word. We are told to "...exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

"...Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

"...Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."

"...Run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Be holy in all manner of conversation (living) that we may have grace and serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Humanity needs an entirely new spiritual rebirth in order to enter God's kingdom. The new age Jesus announced when He came to earth and took upon Himself flesh and blood was not to be bound by the old cycle of physical birth and death, but a new beginning—a new quality of life—eternal life.

In the same way our physical birth makes us a party to Adam's sin and his resulting sin nature, our spiritual birth makes us party to all Jesus Christ did for us in His coming to live among us, His death on the cross, His burial and His resurrection. Knowing this truth and believing it is so, is the first step toward victory over sin. Knowing this that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

The heart of the gospel message is that Jesus Christ came to save—but the consequences of His coming for those who refuse Him is judgment. Those

who truly believe Him in that rebirth shall never die. God will require an end of sin—we will all stand before Him in judgment.

Jesus Christ became our near kinsman by taking upon Himself flesh and blood and He shed that blood for the redemption of each one of us, through His mercy towards us. Death couldn't hold Him and by His resurrection we also have hope to be resurrected and ever be with Him.

Come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy, realizing that we of ourselves, our physical birth, are as nothing.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation..."

—Mary Ellen Lavy
Camden, Indiana

A CALL TO THOUGHT PURITY

An older proverb says, "You are not what you think you are, but you are what you think." The statement is not merely an ancient proverb, but it is also a Bible truth. The Bible states (Proverbs 23:7) that as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

An aged brother writes, "Soon I'll be 87 years old, and I have known the Lord for more than fifty years. I've tried to live a clean life; I read the Bible daily; however, there are times when evil thoughts enter my mind. This makes me sick. Has God turned away from me in my old age?" And the answer is "No—God has not turned away from the brother in his old age." But as long as we live, there is (in the unseen world) a battle going on between Christ and Satan for the control of our minds.

Satan attacks in many ways, but perhaps his most vigorous assault is brought to bear upon our thought-lives. Satan knows that what we think—eventually makes us what we are. He knows that our thoughts are the threads with which we weave the garments that our souls wear—and each of us is responsible for what he welcomes into his mind.

1. THE MIND'S CAPACITY FOR EVIL

The Apostle Paul was keenly aware of the capacity of the mind for evil thoughts. One may dwell upon erotic and lustful thoughts, wrong thoughts about some member of the opposite sex. Another may seethe in his mind with jealousy and envy toward other people.

Still others are consumed with pride and with high thoughts about themselves. The "works of the flesh" in Galatians 5 is a long list of sins—many of which are sins of the mind. These are sometimes spoken of as "sins of the heart" because "the heart" is considered the seat of the emotions and the thoughts.

The mind can easily be covered up (at least for a while), and therefore the mind is difficult to capture for Christ. We can retreat within the walls of our minds, and think about things that are known only to ourselves and God—and so it is difficult for others to detect what we are really thinking. We must remember however that God does know our thoughts, and He is concerned about them—and often they eventually do come out into the open.

In the European country of Italy there is a thriving town called Pompeii. Nearly two thousand years ago it was a bustling and busy city, nestled on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius—not far from the Mediterranean Sea. One man who lived in Pompeii painted filthy pictures on the walls of one of the rooms of his house. He liked to think about dirty and wicked things. He kept the door to that room closed. He thought no one would ever know about his wicked thoughts. But on the night of August 24, A.D. 79, Mt. Vesuvius suddenly erupted, and spued out fire and lava and burning ashes. And when the volcano stopped erupting and the lava cooled, no one could find where the town of Pompeii had been. The whole city was wiped out. For 1,700 years the town of Pompeii was lost. And then, about 200 years ago, archaeologists (as a result of reading ancient books about the city) dug deep into the ground, and found the location of the city, and gradually uncovered the old buildings.

Archaeologists found the houses just as the owners

had left them. Furniture was still standing; bread was still in the ovens; pet dogs were dead—still chained at the doors of the houses along the street. And among others, they found the house of the man who thought nobody would know about the bad pictures he had drawn on the walls of one of the rooms of his house. He thought nobody would ever know about the evil thoughts of his mind—but archaeologists found that room with its dirty pictures—and today, more than 1,900 years later; those who tour Pompeii find that the guide keeps the door to that room locked, so that people won't walk in accidentally and become extremely embarrassed.

The greatest area of sin in the believer's life, is not usually in the area of actions, but in the arena of the thought life. Pride, for example, is a sin of the mind—and so is lust, and suspicion, and discouragement—and we could go on with other additional sins. These are sins of the mind.

Because all of us contend with the old nature (even after we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ)—all of us have trouble with undesirable thoughts popping into our heads. These thoughts can be surprising, sometimes confusing, and sometimes even condemning. Most of us would not want the thoughts that have gone through our minds during the past month, to be flashed on a screen in front of a room for all to see. It could be kind of embarrassing—and perhaps even frightening.

The secret thoughts, however, that pop into our heads are not really an accurate barometer of our spiritual condition. It is what a person continues to think about, and what he delights in, and what he secretly wishes for—that tells more accurately what he is and where he stands spiritually. While we cannot ever completely get rid of the sin-nature here in this life, we can keep it in relative control. And we will look more at that aspect of thought-life near the end of this message.

2. THE MIND'S OCCUPATION WITH THE GOOD

The mind is like a garden which can grow beauty or

grow ugliness. It can produce flowers or it can bring forth weeds. It must be tended with care and with diligence. It must be disciplined by conscious exercise. The mind must be exercised like the body—thinking on good and wholesome things.

The Bible says in Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." We must cultivate spiritual thinking, and the Scriptures give a list of worthy objects that we ought to be thinking about. The list is recorded in Philippians 4:8. We read, "Finally brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there be any virtue; and if there be any praise, think on these things," We note in the last part of the passage, "If there be any virtue, think on these things." The original Greek more literally says, "Since there is virtue" in the kinds of qualities mentioned earlier in the verse; since there is moral excellence in the things mentioned; and since these qualities are praiseworthy—reflect upon them, and allow these things to condition your whole way of life. Let your mind be exercised with these things!

"Whatever things are true"—that is, reliable, in agreement with fact; the opposite of lying and deception. We must never let our minds dwell on every piece of gossip we hear, because it may not be factual. We must be willing to hear the other side of a story, and not hear only one side. According to Ephesians 6:14, truth is part of the Christians' armor. We are to have "our loins girt about with truth." We are to think about truth—and to think about truth is to think about Christ and the Scriptures, because both are called the "truth." In John 14:6 Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And in John 17:17 we read, "Sanctify them through thy truth, for thy word is truth."

"Whatever things are honest"—that is, whatever is earned or received by fair methods, not by cheating and falsehoods. For most of us, it is not the big things that test our honesty; it is the small things.

We will likely never embezzle ten thousand dollars from an employer, but we must be careful about the nickels and dimes and quarters. We must guard against considering stealing towels from a motel room or accepting too much change from a store manager, and this sort of thing.

What goes on in one's mind during the moments of temptation (especially the temptation to be dishonest)? When leaving the motel, Satan says, "This place overcharges anyhow, so I'll get a small part of it back by taking a towel for a souvenir." After accepting too much change in a restaurant: "That lunch really wasn't very good; I'll just keep this extra coin as a sort of refund." But as Christians, each of us needs to make a conscious effort to think always in terms of old-fashioned, second-mile honesty.

There are still other virtues that should saturate our thinking.

"Whatever things are just"—that is, things that are right, and fair, and impartial. It is right to give a customer full measure when selling merchandise in business. It is right to expose doctrinal error and false teachings when presenting the Word of God. It is right to play it fair-and-square in all our dealings. Parents must be sure to be fair-and-square with their children, and diligently try to treat them all alike. We should never plan—in our thoughts—to do anything that is unfair and partial. Whatever things are just (that is, "right" and "fair"), think on these things.

"Whatever things are pure"—that is, free from anything that is tainted. Purity speaks especially about chastity in the realm of sexual relationships. It is pretty hard to live through a single day in our society without having the mind bombarded with sex in some kind of distorted form. Unclean thinking is stimulated by abbreviated dress, obscene pictures, and dirty stories. For this reason, the follower of Christ does not attend movies, he carefully censors his reading material, and he avoids participating in a joke that isn't noble and pure. Most television programs and television commer-

cially are not acceptable to him. Whatever things are pure, think on these things.

"Whatever things are lovely"—that is, things that are beautiful, winsome, and pleasing. "Lovely" things are the opposite of the ugly and the bizarre. The child of God should cultivate the traits of courtesy and pleasantness. He should avoid the snapped answer, the harsh reply, and the sarcastic response. It is sad to see a husband who cannot answer his wife in gentle tones. Such things are not "lovely."

We should think of things that call forth admiration—incidents of faithfulness and courage and loyalty. Paul Harvey, on a news broadcast, sometimes tells of a marriage that lasted 60 (or even 70) years. That is a "lovely" kind of report to hear. By way of contrast, television programs and magazine and newspaper articles that emphasize stories about wife-swapping, child abuse, lesbianism, crude violence, etc., are ugly things that are the opposite of that which is lovely. Whatever things are beautiful, pleasing, and winsome—think on these things.

"Whatever things are of good report"—that is, things spoken in a kindly spirit; things spoken of with good will to others; things which are the opposite of gossip and the spreading of rumors. There are certain actions which are always commendable—such things as courtesy to others, respect for parents, loyalty between husband and wife—these are things of good report.

The word "think" means "to dwell upon"—to focus attention upon—to be occupied with these things. Qualities such as kindness, loyalty, helpfulness; these are qualities we should seriously think about. When a person concentrates on positive, radiant thoughts, he tends to become a positive, radiant person. By way of contrast—unclean thinking will finally bring unclean conduct; negative thinking will make us become bitter and sour; Spirit-controlled thinking can lift our thoughts and bless our whole life. The Scripture passage which we have just analyzed (Philippians 4:8) suggests that the way to conquer evil thinking is not so much to

fight the wicked thoughts, as to cultivate the good thoughts. Philippians 4:8 is a call to think upon good things. (Continued in next issue)

By Harold S. Martin in Bible Helps
Selected by Herman Royer

OBITUARY

DORA L. ROYER, last survivor of the John F. and Anna Cripe Metzger family, was born March 7, 1889, near Edna Mills, Clinton County, Indiana, and died August 30, 1986, at the home of her son Harold at the age of 97 years, 5 months, and 23 days.

She received Christian baptism in the Old German Baptist fellowship in 1911 and identified herself with the Old Brethren in 1913. She is believed to have been the last surviving charter member of the Old Brethren fraternity.

She married Henry Royer on August 4, 1923. They lived near Rossville, Indiana, until the spring of 1928 when they moved to Elkhart County, Indiana, where they lived the remainder of their time.

Surviving are three sons: Harold, Dale, and Artus, all of rural Goshen, Indiana, nine grandchildren, and 20 great grandchildren. Nine nephews and seven nieces also survive.

Henry died February 12, 1961. Also preceding her in death were two brothers, Noah and George, and five sisters, Lydia Yoder, Leah Skiles, Lizzie Metzger, Ida Royer, and Katherine Wolf.

Funeral services were conducted in the Old Brethren meeting house near Wakarusa, Indiana, by the home ministry on September 2, 1986. The text was from Rev. 2:10, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." Burial was in Yellow Creek Mennonite Cemetery beside her husband.

Thus we are again reminded of the frailty of mortal life, the certainty of death, and of the great love of God in providing a more abundant life.

—The Family

HISTORICAL

HE DIED AT HIS POST

Away from his home and the friends of his youth
He hasted, the herald of mercy and truth,
For the love of his Lord and to seek for the lost—
Soon, alas! was his fall, but he died at his post.

The stranger's eye wept that in life's brightest bloom
One gifted so highly should sink to the tomb;
For in order he led in the van of his host,
And he fell like a soldier, he died at his post.

He wept not for himself that his warfare was done,
The battle was fought and the victory won,
But he whispered of those whom his heart clung to most,
"Tell my brethren for me that I died at my post."

He asked not a stone to be sculptured with verse;
He asked not that fame should his merits rehearse;
But he asked as a boon when he gave up the ghost,
That his brethren might know that he died at his post.

Victorious his fall, for he rose as he fell,
With Jesus his Master in glory to dwell,
He passed o'er the stream and has reached the bright
court,
For he fell like a martyr; he died at his post.

And can we the words of his exit forget?
O, no, they are fresh in our memory yet.
An example so brilliant shall not be lost;
We will fall in the work, we will die at our post.

This poem is credited to John Kline (1797-1864) writing on the death of Joseph Miller, who died evidently while on a preaching visit to Ohio. Elder Kline was a well-known travelling preacher in the Brethren Church who also "died at his post." He was shot on his horse near his home while returning from the blacksmith shop, probably because he spoke out against slavery.

From Some Who Led

by D. L. Miller and Galen B. Royer

BAPTISM

Our hearts were made to rejoice once again with the angels in Heaven when Beth Ann Oyler received Christian baptism upon the confession of her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ on August 31. May she ever be true and faithful to Him.

—Melvin Coning

COMMUNION MEETINGS

The Ohio congregation of the Old Brethren Church has appointed their love feast meeting and communion to be held October 18 and 19 at the meeting house near Bradford, Ohio, the Lord willing. A special invitation is extended to all the dear members and friends.

—Hollis Flora

We, the members of the Old Brethren Church in California, have agreed to hold our Fall Lovefeast Meeting, the Lord willing, at Salida on November 15 & 16. We sincerely invite and welcome all our dear brethren and sisters and friends to come and be with us at this time of communion and spiritual revival. May God richly bless this coming meeting and all who attend.

—Joseph L. Cover

BIRTHS

BOWMAN - A son, Alexander Lee, born July 12 to Jerry and Janelle Bowman of Troy, Ohio.

ROYER - A son, Adrian Scott, born July 18 to Philip and Annette Royer of Elkhart, Indiana.

CABLE - A son, Willis Leon born August 6 to Ron and Faythe Cable of Goshen, Indiana.

BOWSER - A son, Abraham Lee, born August 19 to Arnold and Rachel Bowser of Mount Olive, Mississippi.

CORRECTION

Spelling for Joe Royer's Jewel Rebekah.

VOITAN FOR YOUTH

THE VOWS WE MADE

There came a day, remember when
Baptized we asked to be?
And those three vows that we made then
Were made sincerely.

But many months and perhaps years
Since then have come and gone,
And moments came when maybe we
Those promises forgot.

Let us each one those vows review,
Where we have failed repent,
And in our hearts each vow renew;
New goals before us set.

We said that we believed Christ was
God's Son who came to bring
A saving gospel down to us.
We claimed Him as our King.

We promised Satan to reject,
And willingly, his ways.
It's how we think and look and act
That proves an honest say.

Then to be faithful unto death
Was last but not the least.
A challenge for each day on earth
Let's pray we all can meet.

But as we've heard, to say is one,
But then to do another.
Yet by His power it can be done,
And through His grace, my brother.

—Miriam Coning
Goshen, Indiana

CHILDREN'S PAGE

ORDER AND ORGANIZATION

Did you ever pick up a plump juicy pea pod and squeeze it along the "seams" to split it open? If you did, you surely paused then to marvel at the snug row of peas. Each pea was the same shape, each one the same color. Each was fastened by a little growth stem to the inside edge of the pod. In short, each pale green little fruit was "as alike as two peas in a pod!" And when you quickly slid your thumb under the row of peas to pop them out of their slippery shell (and flipped them into you mouth) each tasted the same.

Peas are not the only items in God's great creation that reveal carefully-designed organization. Each one of the hundreds of thousands of growing things God made shows its Maker's amazing genius of order within.

The tiny new bloom of a thistle; the wings of a butterfly; the zip-lock structure of a bird feather; the packed parachutes of a milkweed pod; the layered seeds of a pine cone; the woven twigs of a wren's nest; the wax combs of a beehive; the tunnels of an ant colony—all show God's design! Yes, and the huge earth we live on and the other silent-singing planets and star systems and galaxies—all these are able to continue because they obey God's laws of order.

Are you an orderly person? Do you get out of bed on schedule to an orderly room, find your clothes in an orderly drawer, and fold your nightclothes neatly? Is your breakfast an orderly meal—your day, your thoughts and habits orderly and under control? If so, you should be thankful indeed! Your life can be more fruitful, your proper course more clear.

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

PERFECT TRUST

I may not always know the way
Wherein God leads my feet.
But this I know, that round my path
His love and wisdom meet.
And so I rest content to know
He guides my feet where'er I go.

I may not always understand
Just why He sends to me
Some bitter grief, some heavy loss
But though I cannot see
I kneel and whisper through my tears
A prayer for help, and know He hears.

My cherished plans and hopes may fail,
My idols turn to dust,
But this I know: My Father's love
Is always safe to trust.
These things are dear to me, but still
Above them all I love His will.

Oh precious peace within my heart.
Oh blessed rest to know
A Father's love keeps constant watch
Amid life's ebb and flow.
I ask no more than this: I rest
Content and know His way is best.

—Author Unknown

Selected by Susie Wagner

GOD'S DELIVERANCE

God has a strong arm. This arm is His power to deliver His people in every time of need. But He helps us only as we trust Him and believe in His ability.

Recently as I was working a small field on my little Ford tractor, I saw a blackbird glide by flying low. It landed near and seemed to be carrying something in its claws. I was curious because it is not the time for birds to be building a nest and also because the bird didn't fly on. As I walked over to investigate, the bird flew away, but not far. I could see that its feet were tangled in some string and that it could fly but not stand straight. I tried to catch it to free it, but it would fly away when I came close. I followed it across my line fence, through trees and brush. It finally landed fluttering in a tree out of my reach. How I wanted to free it! And how easy it would have been if the bird would have cooperated!

I had to think, "Am I like this bird sometimes?" God has repeatedly told us how willing He is to help us—to free us—and we don't hold still long enough for Him to operate. And it would be so easy for Him, but we only want to flee away, and we continue in our bondage—our limitations—our hindrances and the things that cripple us—like sin and fears and pride.

Jesus looked over Jerusalem and wept for their unwillingness to have Him deliver them. He mourned "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

Probably no nation or group of people would have reacted too much differently from Israel, although the Saviour did say that Tyre and Sidon would have repented and Sodom would have remained undestroyed if they had seen His mighty works. But we are all reluctant to

give ourselves over to someone who can help us until we really believe that person is able.

In the case of the blackbird, it did not know I was able to help it and no doubt felt it would rather be free with its feet tangled than to trust something unknown. If only it would have believed I could help it!

People who do not know God or believe in Him would rather be free to do as they please and remain tangled in sin. How much they miss in real freedom by refusing to believe God's offers of forgiveness in Jesus Christ!

For a school field trip we recently visited a local fire department where they showed us, among other life saving equipment, the "Jaws of Life" which is a tool of tremendous power for prying open a wrecked car to free someone who would be pinned inside. They told us that careful training was necessary to use the tool, lest in prying one place, pressure might actually be increased on the trapped victim. Think of being pinned like that and seeing a tool of such power and potential to free or harm in the hands of an inexperienced person!

In our relationship to God we need have no such fears. Over and over Jesus tells us, "Fear not." "Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." (or blackbirds! I finally gave up on the blackbird. I didn't climb the tree. Jesus hung on the cross and gave His life for us.) Jesus said (Hebrews 13:5), "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." He also knows just how to help those who are tempted. Hebrews 2:18: "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." We need not fear that Jesus will make our plight worse. He knows how to fill the needs of the soul and proved it over and over by His miracles performed on the bodies of crippled, blind, deaf, and those in bondage to Satan. He makes no mistakes. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:9)

Charles H. Gabriel has written these beautiful words:

Sweet is the promise, "I will not forget thee,"

Nothing can molest or turn my soul away;

E'en though the night be dark within the valley,
Just beyond is shining one eternal day.

As these words tell us, Jesus will be with us to carry us through the last valley and free us from every fetter of mortality. If we can only trust Him to do this! Perhaps this dark valley of the shadow of death seems fearful to us. But God has promised to be with us.

Psalm 89:13 says, "Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand." I remember as a boy walking with my father when we came to a stream of water—perhaps an irrigation ditch. He would have me hold my hands together over my head and he would simply take me by the hands and swing me across to the other side. My part was to do as he said and trust his strength and ability to lift me over. God is able; He is faithful; and He is just waiting for us to trust Him and believe in His ability to deliver us. May we not fly away but hold still and feel His power and salvation. —L.C.

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

Few things are more sought after in this world than freedom. Wars are fought to attain or defend it. People will endure great hardship to reach a country that has it to offer.

In this land where much freedom is available, people go to great lengths to develop a life style which will supposedly bring personal freedom. A close observance soon bears out the fact that few of them are experiencing the desired benefits. Instead they have become slaves to material things, to their desires, or even to this life style.

In John 8:36, Jesus said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Most of us who profess to be His followers claim to have this freedom. I wonder how many of us are experiencing it in truth. Are we really free from the bondage of sin? Are we free from the bondage of the law?

When the slaves were freed at the time of the Civil War, they rejoiced, but many of them were unable to understand or fully use this freedom. Many chose to remain where they were, working for their old master for a small wage rather than reach out into the responsibility and privilege of their new freedom.

I wonder if many of us aren't a little like these former slaves. Jesus paid a tremendous price to deliver us from the bondage of sin, and the law, into glorious liberty in Him. How often do we try to find security in living the letter of the law, or the formality of some system, rather than experiencing the spiritual life and growth that comes from being fully grounded in Him?

I realize and fully support the value of good traditions. I also realize any fellowship must have an understanding of policy in working together. Our trust however, dare not rest in these, but only in Christ's finished work.

To experience freedom in Christ our life must be one of willing self-denial. This freedom is not experienced by indulgence or defense of our rights. In fact unrestrained indulgence and insisting our rights be respected are among the most miserable forms of slavery known. Real freedom in Christ is the power to indulge or retaliate which, instead, willingly denies self in order to promote the higher good.

As we learn the workings of His kingdom and experience this freedom, we learn to feel secure in Him. We then are not threatened by outward conditions or by the actions of others. A life experiencing this freedom will produce the fruits of the Spirit and not manifest the works of the flesh.

How is it with us? Can we appreciate a brother with a different point of view, or different understanding of Scripture? Can we cheerfully accept it if a decision doesn't go our way? Do we try to force our viewpoint? If Christ's Spirit is in us we will not threaten, force, or intimidate others, as these actions are foreign to His teachings.

In various places Christ's church is described as a body, and it says He places each member in it as it pleases Him. A body works harmoniously because the intelligence directs each part through the nervous system. The hand doesn't direct the foot nor does the eye direct the mouth. Each part responds to the intelligence which directs the whole.

In the church, Christ is this intelligence, and He directs us through His Spirit. When the Spirit directs each member in obedience to the Word it makes a wonderfully harmonious body and fully expresses this freedom in Christ.

In Galatians 5:1, the apostle says, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

He also says if we seek justification and security in law and form, we are fallen from grace. May we avoid that sad state, and instead, in experiencing this blessed freedom, become one in Him.

—James Beery
Nappanee, Indiana

BEHOLD WHAT MANNER OF LOVE! I JOHN 3:1

How many times do we read that verse without really thinking about the love that God has bestowed on us? The kind of love that can make us His sons; His children! Men and women, sinful and impure by an inherited nature, made members of the bride of Christ through the boundless and unending love of God.

When the "love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost," (Romans 5:5) something great will happen. Instead of loving ourselves, we will love God, and we will love others. We will do God's will instead of our own, and we will be unselfish in loving others. God's love is unselfish and is best demonstrated in His gift to mankind: Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us. This unselfish love is the "manner of love" we must have to please God.

God's manner of love is costly. Was it easy for

Him to give His most precious possession, His only begotten Son, to die as a sinner for sin? Was it easy for Jesus to bear the cross, the shame and the sin? Is it easy and cheap to unselfishly love your brother or sister in Christ (or even an enemy)? No! It wasn't easy for God; it cost Him His Son. It wasn't easy for Jesus; it cost Him His life. It won't be easy for us either; we too will have to give up something that is very dear to all of us: our self nature. Loving others with God's manner of love takes effort and determination—a conscious act of our wills. We must choose to give, choose to be unselfish, choose to love.

The apostle John wrote much about love, Why? "That ye may have fellowship...with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ," "That your joy may be full," and "That ye sin not" (I John 1:3-4, 2:1). Do you want to be attached to and know God and Jesus? Do you want to have a full, joyful life? Do you want to be free from sin? The manner of love that God has to give can make these a reality in each of our lives.

How can God's love keep sin out of our lives? If His love is in us, we will abhor sin and continually work at being more pure, more holy and more like Jesus. With God's manner of love working in and through us, we'll be preserved from sin: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (I John 3:9) Have we reached that level of purity? No, we all must admit that we haven't. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (I John 1:8)

Is there then a continual condemnation from God upon His children? No! God's manner of love in Christ Jesus has not only made a way possible to make us His children, but to keep us that way: "...If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; And he is the propitiation for our sins..." (I John 2:1,2) "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9) Notice that this

aspect of God's love is conditional: "If we confess..." God will not tolerate ongoing sin in our lives!

As we strive for perfection, let us remember that the two most important commandments in God's word deal solely with love: loving God and loving others. (Mark 12:28-34) As we grow in our spiritual lives, let's cultivate this manner of love, not the world's selfish cheap, shallow, shortlived, lustful love. That kind will all pass away, but God's love will never cease or fail. With His manner of love in us and upon us whom have we to fear: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?...I am persuaded that "nothing will! Praise the Lord!

Written with the hope of someday being like Jesus.

—Lloyd Wagner
Modesto, California

A CALL TO THOUGHT PURITY (Continued from last issue)

3. THE MIND'S BATTLE FOR THE RIGHT

Living the Christian life involves a daily battle. The Apostle Paul spoke of the great conflict that raged within him. He says in Romans 7:23, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." On the one hand, his mind was bombarded with solicitations to evil; on the other hand, there was the appeal of the Spirit of God, seeking to bring Paul's mind under God's authority.

We are all subject to Satan's attacks. Every one of us has had problems with wrong thoughts. It is true that the work of sanctification is a slow process, and never reaches perfection here in this life—yet each of us has a responsibility in the realm of thought-control. God says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts!" (Isaiah 55:7-9). And again, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee" (Isaiah 26:3). And in another

place, "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2).

But how does one go about conquering evil thoughts? What are some of the practical approaches? One method for defeating evil of any kind, is to run away from it. The Bible says, "Let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Timothy 2:19). And again, "Flee youthful lusts" (II Timothy 2:22). When Joseph was tempted by Potiphar's wife, he fled and got away (Genesis 39:12). This is why it is best not to buy a television set. This is why young couples should plan things together, go away together, and always let the other partner know of their whereabouts. One way to conquer evil thoughts—is to stay away from situations that can stimulate wrong thinking and provide easy occasions to sin.

Another means for achieving victory over evil thoughts is to be on the alert and to watch and pray. We must constantly reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God. It takes conscious effort; it takes human resolve; it is not going to come automatically—but it can be done. Controlling the thought-life requires a determined effort on our part. We can't keep Satan from injecting wrong thoughts into our minds, but we don't have to dwell on those thoughts. There's a difference between receiving a thought and retaining a thought. The old saying about keeping a bird from building a nest in our hair is altogether true.

What shall we do about evil thoughts that invade our minds? What shall be our response to the wandering thoughts that disturb our prayer time? One answer is this: Act the policeman! Bring every thought into captivity (into obedience to Christ). The Bible says, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, . . . and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (II Cor. 10:4-5) When an unlawful thought seeks to enter your mind—be on the alert; reckon yourself dead to it; arrest it. Keep a watchful eye. Guard your mind all

day long. Sit in judgment upon every thought that flickers through your mind. When sinful thoughts pop into your head—repeat aloud a Scripture verse; begin to sing a hymn; offer a prayer for deliverance. And slowly but surely (with God's help) you will bring into captivity your thought-life.

If we give diligence to think upon those things which are lovely and honest and praiseworthy—we will experience growth in grace, and our lives will become more pure—ready to meet Jesus when He comes. On the other hand, we can usually hide our thoughts from others if we want to. We can pose as saints (if we choose to), while at the same time our thoughts are feasting on garbage. Whether you dwell on evil thoughts and delight in them, or whether you reject evil thoughts and despise them—is one major test of your spiritual concern and your loyalty to Christ.

May the Lord help us to guard our minds and give us power to reject what is untrue and help us not to let any picture hang on the halls of our imaginations, that we would not want hanging on the walls of our homes.

By Harold S. Martin in Bible Helps
Selected by Herman Royer

MEDITATIONS: THE RESURRECTION

We find it hard to believe something we hear, unless we have seen something similar. Jesus used parables to illustrate His speech with things that people were used to seeing. The Resurrection was very hard for the Apostles to believe, even though they had seen some restored to life. Jesus asked them at one time, "Have ye your hearts yet hardened, having ears hear ye not, and do ye not perceive?" Even so we find ourselves slow to whole-heartedly believe that this is possible. It is impossible to us unless the Spirit has control of our hearts. So let us prepare for the next step in life.

—Ernest Wagner, Modesto, California

FAITH

Faith enables us to realize our true position of pilgrims and strangers upon earth, looking for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. It is unto this that we are introduced by faith at our conversion. For what is our conversion but a turning our back upon the world and bidding farewell to all that the heart had hitherto been entwined around?

It is then that, like Abraham, we forsake all and go out not knowing whither. Our ties are broken, though sometimes hard to sever. New ones are formed, though not on earth. We begin to look around us and find all things new. We feel that we are strangers—strangers in that spot where we have been so long at home. But this is our joy. We have left our father's house, but we are hastening to a more enduring home. We have taken leave of the world—but we have become heirs of the eternal Kingdom, sons and daughters of the Lord almighty. We have left Egypt, but Canaan is in view. We are in the wilderness, but we are free. Ours is a pathless waste, but we move forward under the shadow of the guardian cloud. Sorrowful, we yet rejoice; poor, we make many rich; having nothing, yet we possess all things. We have a rich inheritance in reversion and a long eternity in which to enjoy it without fear of loss, or change, or end.

By Horatius Bonar

Selected by Susan R. Coning

COMMUNION MEETING

We, the members of the Old Brethren Church in California, have agreed to hold our Fall Lovefeast Meeting, the Lord willing, at Salida on November 15 & 16. We sincerely invite all our dear brethren and sisters and friends to come and be with us at this time of communion and spiritual revival.

—Joseph L. Cover

THOU GREAT FIRST CAUSE!

Thou great First Cause! least understood,
In every clime adored;
We all know this—that thou art good,
The universal Lord!

If I am right, Thy Grace impart,
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, O teach my heart
To find that better way.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

—Selected by Bertie Baker

I shall live on in the lives of my children,
whether for good or ill,
Long, long after my voice that is speaking today,
is still.
I shall speak on through the generations
that follow me. Word by word
As I gather my children close about me,
my voice shall be heard.
On and on through the vast forever—
whatever words I say
Will live in the lives that shall come after
my brief day.
I fall on my knees—I pray for guidance,
for wisdom in my choice
Of words today—Oh Lord, speak through me,
and be my voice!

—Grace Noll Crowell

Selected by Joe & Elizabeth Royer

Those who live the Christian life never see each
other for the last time. —Selected

HISTORICAL

The following is an incident from the life of Elder John Kline, travelling Brethren preacher in the 1800's.

DANIEL MILLER'S DWELLING HOUSE

This is about five miles north of Harrisonburg, in Rockingham County, Virginia. It is at present occupied by Benjamin Miller, the youngest son of Daniel Miller. He stands high as overseer of the Greenmount church. He has a numerous family of intelligent and godly children, all now grown up, and members of the Brethren church.

At the time of this meeting, Brother Daniel Miller's family was young, and most of the children were at home, eighteen in all, and all children of one mother. Brother Kline says: "I felt deeply impressed with the weighty responsibility resting upon the father and mother of this pleasant and orderly household; and not upon them only, but upon us also, who are preachers of the Word. In this feeling, I proposed the reading of the fifteenth chapter of John's Gospel. I spoke briefly from these words: 'If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin.' John 15:22.

SERMON

"These words are a part of our Lord's farewell counsel to his little band of chosen disciples. This was just before his betrayal into the hands of his murderers. He spoke to them about this sinful world. He told them how the people of the world would treat them, and what they would think of the glorious Gospel which they were soon to proclaim. 'In the world,' said he to them, 'ye shall have tribulation; but in me, ye shall have peace.' The text does not teach that men who are ignorant of God's Word are sinless; neither does it teach that the doctrine which our blessed Savior taught tends to make men sinners. Oh, no! But this is what it means: That God is so merciful and gracious that until men are instructed and warned of their danger, he does not hold them severely accountable. But when the light of truth

is shed around them, and the way of life and salvation pointed out to them, and they then shut their eyes to the light and close their hearts to knowledge, he holds them accountable, and deals with them as sinners.

"I feel now to address a few words to the dear young people who are assembled here. The Lord bless you in the dew of your youth, while your hearts are yet tender; before age and sin have made you hard, give your hearts to God. This you can do by loving our Lord Jesus Christ, who laid down His life for you. When you love him with the heart, you believe on Him with the heart; and when you believe on Him with the heart, you have a desire in your heart to obey Him by doing His commandments. You will purify your souls by obeying the truth. 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,' 'Seek the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near;' for, saith He, 'they that seek me early shall find me.'

"But you may desire to know how you are to seek the Lord, and where you are to look for Him. I hope you are thinking of this now; so I will tell you. The only place where the Lord can be found is in His Holy Word. There you find Him in the form of the man Christ Jesus. And whilst He is there set forth as the 'man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,' He is also set forth as the 'true God and eternal life.' He there says: 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.' 'And he that drinketh of the water that I will give unto him shall never thirst.' This water is the Truth of His Word. It so fills the soul with love and light and joy and peace, as to become a fountain of delight within us. Reading God's Word in the right spirit is drinking of the Water of Life. When this truth finds a place in the memory through the love of it, the memory keeps our thoughts perpetually supplied with it, and thus it becomes, as our Lord says, 'a fountain within us unto everlasting life.'"

Selected from
Life and Labors of Elder John Kline, 1835

FOR YOUTH

WHAT DID YOU PURPOSE?

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself." Daniel? A captive; still a youth; far from home and kindred; a child of God in a pagan province. There were enough ingredients to make him bitter and arrogant. But he purposed.

Daniel chose, and he chose for the right. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." (Joshua 24:15) Purpose of heart is a personal responsibility. Whether it be abstaining from forbidden food or sticking to the speed limit, we individually decide our demeanor.

We need to make our choice regardless of popular trend or public opinion. Apparently Daniel was more devoted to truth and right than fitting in with his peers. Seemingly the majority of other Jewish young men did not take principle as seriously as he did. They ate the king's meat and drank his wine. But Daniel had mastered the lesson Jesus had outlined to Peter: "What is that to thee? follow thou me."

This kind of courageous purpose of heart takes rigorous self-discipline. It calls for self-crucifixion. "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34)

The mastery of rigorous lessons is never without reward though. Daniel purposed properly, and God blessed abundantly. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends came forth robust and healthy. Their bodies were strong, and their I.Q.'s surpassed that of the wisest magicians and astrologers. Proper purpose will always prevail.

"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; Therefore choose life" (Deuteronomy 30:19).

By Daisy Sue King in Companions
Selected by Nancy Olyer

A philosopher sees less on his tiptoes than a Christian sees on his knees.

—Selected

CHILDREN'S PAGE

"WHY CAN'T I BE...?"

"Mother," a weary girl complains, "I'm so tired of low grades! Why can't I be smarter—like Elaine?"

A dissatisfied 9-year-old boy grumbles, "I wish I wasn't so short. Why can't I be tall, like Bill?"

"It just isn't fair!" a 13-year-old girl sobs. "People always laugh at me. I can't help it that I don't talk clearly, like other people! Why can't I be like everyone else?"

"I sure wish we didn't have to live in town," a 14-year-old boy laments. "Why can't we live on a farm out in the country? Why can't I be a farmer's son, instead of a storekeeper's?"

Have you ever caught yourself asking similar questions—frustrating questions with no answers that could satisfy you?

As we grow up to maturity, we soon learn that some things in life can be changed, and some things simply can't. Our Creator recognized this when He asked, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" Jer. 13:23a. Some things we must simply accept, for it is not in our power to change them. And here's where nature's example would teach us its simple wisdom: If something can't be changed, just learn to live with it as well as you can. If a bird loses one eye, it hunts for food as well as it can with just one eye—and keeps on singing.

Like the leopard, we can't change the way we are made. But we can change the way we feel about it! Let's not compare ourselves with others, but thank God for what we can be!

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *I Peter 2:11*

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving, Lord to Thee
For blessings full and free
Of Thy great grace;
To know Thy Word and will
Thy ways in us instill;
Thy righteousness fulfill
In time and place.

Thanksgiving is Thy due;
May we to Thee be true
In word and deed;
Walking along the way,
Leading to brighter day,
Nearer to Thee we pray,
Humbly we plead.

Thanksgiving for the grave
Opened; and power to save
Given our Lord.
See Him ascending high
Into the riven sky;
Praise be to Him, we cry
Our living Word.

Thanksgiving for this land,
Blessings on every hand,
Bountiful store;
Let us give thanks and sing,
To Thee our God and King;
Honor and tribute bring
Forevermore.

—J. I. Cover (1963)

THANKSGIVING AND DEVOTION

Job, whom we think of as a symbol of patience, was becoming upset. His friends came to comfort him and proved to be accusers instead of sympathizers. He finally lashed out at them: "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you. But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?" Eliphaz had reminded Job, "...Who ever perished, being innocent?" (4:7) Bildad had charged, "If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee..." (8:16) Zophar had been even more accusing: "Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed? (11:3)

To go back to the root of Job's problem, Satan had accused God of favoring Job. He said, "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him?...thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face."

Job, even in his distress, passed the test; he would not "curse God" even at the suggestion of his wife. But in the course of his trials, he learned much and has given his example to the world as part of God's Holy Word. When he saw the greatness and goodness of God more clearly he exclaimed, "...I uttered that I understood not...I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (42:3-6)

All this should inform us today of how good God is and of where our problems really originate—in the accusations of a malicious and sinister enemy of God and man. He is still accusing that we serve God for gain. And how is it with us? Do we?

At this season, minds are focused on thanksgiving. We know partly how good God is. We understand by His Word that He gave Jesus to be our Saviour. And that we can never repay—that we have no resources with which to pay even part of the price of our salvation. So then, is there no significant response for us to make? If we cannot pay, is it sufficient to give Him thanks? If it is genuine, from the heart, involving the submitting of our wills, softening our pride, inclining our hearts, then perhaps we could say this describes our response of fervant thanksgiving. But it is so easy to offer God our thanks and then go on our own selfish way—in effect, serving God for the blessings He gives us.

Perhaps it would be good for us to experience something similar to what Job went through. He lost everything and had to start over. And even though he was a "perfect and upright" man before, he no doubt appreciated God's good things more the second time.

Many have had this same experience as they were driven and persecuted from place to place. And we, even in this land of prosperity, must somehow in the Spirit or in reality as Paul "suffer the loss of all things, and count them but dung. that (we) may win Christ." We somehow must get our values right. Jesus asks us, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36)

Does the Lord ask each of us to "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor..." as he told the rich young man? This young man had his heart on his possessions, for he went away sorrowful. Joseph of Arimathaea was rich, but he was also devout and a disciple of Jesus. Jesus obviously did not tell him what he told the young man.

But let us take the lesson to heart. If our affections are on the things of earth and not on things above, we must get rid of them or change our affections. Paul said for the distress of his time that they that buy should be "as though they possessed not." Is it possible for us to have this attitude? I believe we should hold our possessions in such a way that, if all were taken away, we would not be any poorer but still rich

in faith. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

If our hearts are hopelessly set on the things of earth, then perhaps we should not thank God for them this year, but pray that He would take them away and show us the true riches. Jesus tells us (Mark 12:15), "Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

But back to the question of our response to God for all His blessings—both temporal and spiritual. Psalm 116:12 says, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" The writer has some positive suggestions that we can use in our time.

1. "I will take the cup of salvation..." This response that only a few are making in our time, honors God in receiving what He has paid so much for. To spurn His salvation is to refuse Jesus and God Himself.

2. "...And call upon the name of the Lord." God wants us to communicate with Him just like we who are parents treasure response and communication from our children. He wants us to tell Him our troubles and recognize that He has power and skill to deliver us.

3. "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people." God is pleased to see us live up to our promises. "In the presence of all his people" is an important part, too. We can worship and serve alone, but how encouraging it is to testify before others by our life and effort that God is worthy of all our time.

4. "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord." This "sacrifice" is one we can and should make continually. Unthankfulness is a sin characteristic of the last days. May we not be overtaken by a "taking-things-for-granted" attitude or a I-have-it-coming mind. May we give God our thanks from our hearts and also our life service.

—L.C.

"Our hearts, our all, to Thee we give;
The gift, though small, do Thou receive."

"WHO SHALL ASCEND UNTO THE HILL OF THE LORD?
HE THAT HATH CLEAN HANDS, AND A PURE HEART."

"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." (Genesis 4:7)

God was talking to Cain after his offering was rejected. Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. In my own words the Lord was saying that if we do what we know we should, we have nothing to feel guilty about, but if we do things we know we shouldn't we feel guilty, and sin is lying at our door waiting to take us over. When we realize this, we can rule over this evil; if we do not, sin will rule over us.

Even today you and I are made up like Cain was; we have our selfish nature to deal with. Maybe Cain realized why God wasn't pleased with his offering and was ready to repent, but the old devil was there telling Cain that God wasn't fair, and that he had a right to feel sorry for himself. I can imagine Cain just dwelling on it so long that the only way out was to kill Abel. That is what will happen today if we dwell on the negative constantly. We will not kill our brother physically, but whatever happens, God will not be pleased. Satan doesn't care how we grieve our Father—just so we grieve Him. It is the little foxes that spoil the vine. I once heard a man say that his father told him not to let the devil get a hold of him in any way, not even his finger. If he gets your finger he will twist and jerk till he has your arm. The more we fall into sin, the harder it is to get out.

No matter how much advice or counsel we get, we have to want to change, or we will still be in the same old rut. If Cain would have taken heed to God's voice and lived a righteous life, how much better it would have been. It isn't easy to swallow our pride and let others know we were wrong, but it is the only way.

After Cain had slain his brother, the Lord told him, "...A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth."

Isn't that the way we feel when we are not living a Godly life? We feel like a fugitive running away from danger—just fleeing. There have been many times after hearing a sermon that I felt like disappearing if I could. I just knew the preacher was talking to me. Why? Because I was like Cain; sin was lying at my door. I knew things were not right, but I was too selfish to admit I was in the wrong.

We need to apply every sermon to our lives, and there will always be points we need to improve on, but when we feel ill toward the minister, there is serious trouble in our life.

It is like when I fail to brush my teeth as I should, my gums bleed and the mouthwash burns like fire. When I am in this condition, I don't feel good about it. It would be foolish for me to throw away the brush and mouthwash. If I do, there is no more hope of ever being better. But instead of throwing them away, just keep on brushing, and finally there will be no more hurt or burn.

When Stephen was before the council rebuking them for killing the prophets and even Jesus, they "...Cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord." Why did they act this way? Because their conscience pricked them, they were guilty. Just like Cain, they thought getting rid of their opponent would make things better. Too many times this is the way we act. When we hear something that pricks our conscience, we stop our ears to what the minister is saying. Too many times we throw stones at him, not visible stones, but stones of hate, envy, strife, and many others. Next time we feel uncomfortable in the house of God, let's examine our hearts. Somewhere there will be a cavity that needs to have the decay ground out, and the proper ingredients filled in. There will be some bleeding and burning, but as the Word brushes us completely, the stronger we will get. I hope as I go about my daily work, that I can always remember God's question to Cain. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?"

—Everett Oyler

New Paris, Indiana

Rio Verde, Goias, Brazil, S.A.
November 11, 1986

Dear Readers,

Wednesday, June 18, my oldest son and I traveled from Rio Verde by bus to Goiania (the capital city of the state) to transact some business. Upon arriving there at 12 o' clock noon, we didn't purchase our return bus tickets as we didn't know what time we would be finished with the business. We arrived back at the bus station at 6 o'clock P.M. and the ticket agent said, "All of the bus tickets to Rio Verde are sold out until the 11:00 P.M. bus." We bought our tickets for that bus and then went down town and ate our evening meal and did a little shopping. It was 8:30 P.M. when we arrived back at the bus station, so we walked across the street and sat and visited with two night watchmen at an automobile dealership. In a little while a young boy came around the end of the post office building of the bus station (across the street from where we were sitting) with a newspaper in his hand. He must have been 7 to 9 years of age. He laid down on the concrete walk next to the building and began to cover himself with the newspaper leaves. He wasn't having much success as a breeze kept blowing them off. In a little while he jumped up and ran back toward the bus station terminal. Thirty or forty minutes later I noticed him lying over there on the concrete walk curled up with the newspaper leaves lying around him.

I walked over to him and began to cover him up and talk to him. He was not yet asleep, but was lying on his side with his eyes closed, and never looked up or moved during our conversation. I stroked his hair lightly with my hand as we conversed. I asked him three times, "Where is your house and home? Where do you live?" Each time he simply and clearly responded, "The world." I then questioned him about his father and mother. This must have been extremely painful and sad to him, as it was to me when he responded, "I don't have a father and mother." I then said to him, "You have a Father in heaven that loves you very much." He

said, "No, I don't have a father." I told him, "I understand what you are saying; but do you know about God in heaven that has created all things good and you and me? He loves you and cares for you. He is your Father." He simply stated once more, "I don't have a father!" I then asked, "What is your name?" He said, "I don't know! I don't have a name." I asked him if he was hungry, and he responded, "No." I then asked, "Do you always have enough to eat?" He said, "Yes." I asked, "Do you have work to do?" He answered, "I polish and shine shoes." We see many small boys at the bus stations shining shoes. I then told him, "May our Father in heaven bless you, and have a good night's sleep. I will be praying for you. Good night!" I was disappointed I couldn't have his name to try to contact him in the future.

A while later we boarded the bus for the trip home, and as the bus pulled out and went around the end of the bus station, the boy was still lying there under the starlit sky covered with the newspaper.

Brethren, Sisters, Neighbors, Friends and Children, this child could have been you or I. This experience helps us appreciate more fully what our Father in heaven has given us. His word tells us, To whom much is given, there is much required. Just think a moment of ourselves in this child's situation. No house, no home, no earthly father or mother to teach us about our heavenly Father and the Saviour Jesus (the only meaning of this life). You and I realize and know there are many other children in this world suffering more than this boy. Besides the adversities he has they are hungry and cold, where there is war and strife. Let's continue to pray for and help the world's hungry people as we have opportunity, that they may receive natural and spiritual food. "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard." (Proverbs 21:13)

I am trying to be more thankful and appreciative than I have ever been before. All we have belongs to our heavenly Father.

May we continue to thank and glorify our Father in Heaven through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

—Wade Flora

MEDITATIONS

HARVEST TIME

Jesus told His disciples, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white, already to harvest." When we read reports from all around the world, it makes us realize to some extent that we are in the eleventh hour of harvest. The parable of the tares and the wheat, which with our method of harvest would cause a great loss of grain, does not show a loss with the Lord's harvest; with an innumerable number of angels there will be no loss of good grain. As we are told, not one sparrow is forgotten by God. When the Lord by the prophet told Hezekiah, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live," he repented and besought the Lord, and he was given ample time to do so.

BLESSINGS

I know we cannot appreciate how our bodies are created, with all the different parts working to help each other, until we lose the use of some parts and have to do what we are able to do with those parts and senses that remain. When we look back we have reflections of the past that make us realize what blessings we have had and how many we are still allowed to enjoy. We are living in a time of great abundance of temporal and spiritual blessings. Even in old age there are food and shelter provided. And we are free to worship the Lord and enjoy peace and comfort in His service.

THANK THE LORD

We should thank the Lord that He has provided a home for us who are disabled where we can come and be cared

for. As long as our senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, etc. remain, every effort is made to encourage and help. Also our spiritual life is encouraged, having a comfortable room for services and faithful friends who are willing to give their time and labor to encourage us on our way in hope of a better life ahead.

—Ernest Wagner
Modesto, California

WHERE DID SHE GO?

"Mama, Mama,
See this book?
Would you please
Just stop and look?"

"Later on we'll
Get it down;
But right now
Let's get to town."

"Mama, Mama,
Did you know,
I would like to
Help you sew?"

"Not right now,
I'm in a hurry;
Go and play;
I must scurry."

"Mama, Mama,
Would you sit
Down here and
Help me knit?"

"I really should,
That I know,
But the house
Needs cleaning so."

"Mama, Mama,
Can we pray?
Things are troubling
Me today."

"That's just fine;
This seam is sewn...
Wait a minute—
There's the phone."

"Mama, Mama,
Now I've grown;
Can you see,
How time has flown?"

"Daughter, Daughter,
Come and stay?
Why is it now,
You turn away?"

—Susan Harper
Napanee, Indiana

CONTENTMENT

A bishop who was contented and cheerful through a long period of trial, when asked the secret of his contentment, said, "I will tell you. I make a right use of my eyes."

"Please explain."

"Most willingly," was the answer. "First, I look up to Heaven and remember that my principal business is to get there. Then I look down upon the earth and think how small a place I shall occupy when I am buried. Then I look around and see the many who are in all respects much worse off than I am. Then I learn where true happiness lies, where all our care ends, and how little reason I have to complain."

Author unknown
Selected by Bertie Baker

HISTORICAL

LIFE AND LABORS OF ELDER JOHN KLINE, 1842

Thursday, September 8. Anna (Brother Kline's wife) and I go to Lost River to attend a love feast. We stay all night at Celestine Whitmore's.

Sunday, September 11. Meeting and love feast at Mathias's. Hebrews 8 is read. We have a delightful day and night, and many people are assembled. I speak on the chapter read, and also upon the general scope and design of the epistle to the Hebrews. Hebrews and Jews and Israelites are all one; each being only a different name for the same race of people. The name Hebrew appears to have been derived from Eber or Heber, the grandson of Shem. The name Jew is supposed to have been derived from Judah, one of the sons of Jacob. The name Israelite was derived from Jacob whom the angel of the Lord called Israel.

This epistle was written to the Hebrews, or Jewish Christians, to remove from their minds some difficulties and obscurities in their way of rightly understanding the way of salvation provided by our Lord Jesus Christ. On account of their former connection with the ceremonial law and the Mosaic ritual, it was hard for them to see and appreciate the simplicity that is in Christ. Like Naaman the Syrian, they thought the ceremonial part should possess more parade and show, to have in it the required virtue. He thought that bathing his body seven times in the river Jordan was a ceremony too simple to remove his leprosy; so these Hebrew Christians thought the simple ordinances of the house of God were too insignificant to take away their sins. They had been instructed in the ordinances of a worldly sanctuary and a worldly priesthood. As Christ had abolished all these, by giving to the church the spiritual substance of which these were the shadow, it was necessary that they be very particularly and plainly taught how this was done. The writer of this epistle has shown this in very clear light.

The chapter read speaks of the True Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. It presents Jesus as the Mediator of a better covenant, which has been established upon better promises. This is the covenant: "I will put my laws into their mind, and on their heart also will I write them: I will be to them a God; and they shall be to me a people. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." These are cheering words: "Their sins will I remember no more." Beloved brethren and sisters, this is precisely the way God deals with every one of His truly penitent and obedient children. He remembers their sins no more. No matter how great sinners they have been, no matter how they have abused and dishonored Him, He holds nothing against them. In this we may see the spirit we should all possess. We are all commanded to be followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love.

I have sometimes heard a brother or a sister say: "I can forgive, but I cannot forget." Brethren, we would not feel very well if the Lord were to say this to us and of us. How would we be made to feel if our blessed Lord were to say to each of us: "I am willing to forgive your trespasses against me; I am willing to save you, because I have promised to save all who repent and believe My Gospel; but I can never forget the way you have treated Me, and will never be willing to trust you as I could have trusted you; and can never again have the same confidence in you that I would have had, had you treated Me in a different way"? Such forgiveness this on the part of our Lord toward us would rob salvation of all its joy. It would turn the sun into darkness and the moon into blood. It would change the harmony of heaven into notes of discord in our ears. But this would be the very sort of forgiveness that is implied in the saying: "I can forgive, but I cannot forget."

Notice, however, the care and the order apparent in the insertion of that loving clause, "and your sins will I remember no more." Notice the introduction: "I will

be to you a God; and ye shall be to me a people." In what follows, the Divine Love is strongly marked: "For I will be merciful to your iniquities, and your sins will I remember no more." This last crowns it all. The same thing is meant by the prophet in another place where the Lord says: "As far as the east is from the west, so far have I removed your sins from you." And again, "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." So deep down are they that they will never rise up against us any more.

Such must our forgiveness of one another be, brethren and sisters, if we would imitate the Lord. We should never forget that genuine forgiveness implies a complete forgetfulness of all trespasses in the past. Our Lord says, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses." To forgive from the heart is to forgive in love; and love thinketh no ill of one's brother or sister.

Let each one examine himself. If you feel in your heart that you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your brother and your sister in the Lord as you love yourself, I feel authorized in behalf of Christ and the church to say to you that Jesus will remember your sins no more. You have a right to sing the song:

Savior, more than life to me,
I am clinging close to Thee;
Let Thy blood, by faith applied,
Keep me ever near Thy side.
Every day and every hour,
Let me feel Thy cleansing power,
Till my soul is lost in love,
In a brighter world above. (Fanny Crosby)

From Life and Labors of Elder John Kline
by Benjamin Funk

ADDRESS CHANGE

Bill Miller's P.O. Box 10 (5013 Lanewood Ct.)
Salida, California 95368

FOR YOUTH

ENCOURAGEMENT IN SINGING

Have you ever been discouraged and thought that nothing else could go wrong? Then as you pause in your troubled thoughts, you hear a song, "Lift me up above the shadows..." or "...all our sins and griefs to bear." All of a sudden, if you let the lovely music and inspiring words sink down inside, your problems seem small.

What a beautiful thing a song is! It is something you can enjoy while you work or play. A person can even be meditating on a song without making a sound. God has given us voices to sing His praises.

A song can be uplifting to the elderly. The singers are rewarded with smiles and brightened countenances from those who must spend many long, lonely hours. Even a tiny baby responds to a song. Time and again have little ones fallen asleep to one of our beautiful hymns.

I think God enjoys our songs the most when they are spontaneous. Sometimes you feel so joyful or thankful. What better way do we have to tell God our feelings than in a song or prayer? Often the singing does not stop with one verse but many over and over.

The Hebrew children sang as they crossed the Red Sea. David was a musician and sang with his harp. Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn after the Last Supper. Paul encourages us in Ephesians 5:19: "Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

Surely we all want to sing that new song in Heaven. There we will hear singing like we have never heard. All will join in praise to our Maker. May we each do our part in cheering our brother in song.

Lord give us singing hearts—
Hearts that are joyful through all the day;
Hearts that are cheerful though skies are gray,
Singing with Jesus though rough the way—
Lord, give us singing hearts. (Tabitha Coblentz)

—Rosanna Cover, Tuolumne, California

CHILDREN'S PAGE

DISCERNING THE TIMES

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Eccl. 3:1). Do you know what time it is? A clock tells you the hour, and a calendar tells the day and year. But what time is it? How does this present moment of time fit in with all of time and eternity? What time is it on God's clock? How many seconds do you have left in your life here on earth? And how much longer will it be until God says "Time shall be no longer!" and eternity begins?

God wants us to know the times. He made a huge clock that is thousands of thousands of miles wide. The sun is the "day hand," the moon is the "month hand," and the changing constellations form the huge "year hand." God placed these wonders in the sky "for signs, and for seasons," and men used them for thousands of years to tell the time.

God also provides for us in the gradual change of the seasons. Many people live in parts of the world where the winters get very cold—so cold that people would freeze if they were unprepared. Have you ever noticed how God designed the seasons to change from comfortable summer to dangerous winter? If every day would be exactly one degree colder than the day before we would hardly notice the change, or be prepared for winter. But, instead, we have a sudden "cold snap" that warns us to get that firewood made, and to bring in everything from the garden. Then, we have more weeks of warmer weather before winter gets dangerously cold.

What time is it? As we grow in days and years, let's grow in wisdom too—to discern God's times and seasons.

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *1 Peter 2:11*

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

When marshalled in the nightly plain,
The glittering hosts bestud the sky;
One Star alone in all that train
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.
Hark! hark to God! the chorus breaks
From every host, from every gem;
But one alone the Saviour speaks;
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once on the raging sea I rowed;
The wave was loud; the night was dark;
The ocean yawned and rudely showed
The wind that tossed my floundering bark.
Deep horror there my vitals froze;
Death struck; I ceased the tide to stem;
When suddenly a star arose;
It was the Star of Bethlehem.

It was my life, my light, my all;
It bade my dark forbodings cease;
And through the storm and danger's thrall
It led me to the port of peace.
Now safely moored, my perils o'er,
I'll sing first in night's diadem:
Forever, oh! forevermore!
The Star, the Star of Bethlehem!

—J. I. Cover

GOD'S MERCY AND GRACE

"In China they celebrate their holiday just about like they do in the United States. For weeks in advance they prepare for a parade and make special decorations and then stay up all night celebrating the holiday."

The words from the local paper were by a young Chinese teacher observing and learning teaching methods here to use in her own country. She was seeing "Christmas" for the first time and comparing the American observance to the Chinese celebration of their New Year. The occasion was different, but the celebration was "about the same." Is it possible that people the world over are very much alike and love to celebrate and that the occasion doesn't really matter so much? The fact that a secular (or perhaps heathen) celebration could bear resemblance to what is supposed to be a Christian observance would indicate that something besides the occasion is determining the way it is observed.

How God must be grieved to see celebration obscure the event when He gave His Son into the world to be a ransom for sinners! We could take much space denouncing the heathenish and ungodly practices of the world. Christians can well be warned that even in this, "...God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." But perhaps we can more profitably use our space to call attention to the momentous event of Jesus' incarnation, and to urge one and all that, if we celebrate, it must be to God and not to the world or to our own selfish lusts.

In studying the Word regarding Jesus' birth, we cannot miss the love and mercy of God expressed in Jesus. Old Testament times were attended by war and violence in overcoming the physical forces that opposed Israel and barred them from their peace and prosperity. Justice was administered on wickedness whether it was found in the heathen or lurking within the camp of the saints. Many evidences of God's mercy shone even then,

but now as the day of grace dawns and the "Sun of righteousness arise(s) with healing in his wings," (Malachi 4:2) it breaks out in full splendor in view and available to all men.

The song of the angels was of peace and good will toward men. The angel told the trembling shepherds, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." The controversy the Lord had with His people (spoken of by Hosea and Micah) is now to be resolved. The "Daysman" or Mediator longed for by Job has now arrived. "And he shall speak peace unto the heathen," as prophesied in Zechariah 9:10.

Jesus told impatient and indignant James and John, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." (Luke 9:55,56) He also said in John 3:17, "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Jesus came with an offer of grace, mercy, and salvation. Satan has a multitude of tricks to try to obscure this purpose of God to save. But God's love shines through to those who will believe.

It would be incomplete to represent God's mercy offered in only the birth of Jesus. Peter writes in his first epistle (1:3), "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..." So it is by Jesus' resurrection that we have this lively hope. His resurrection was accomplished because He died and conquered death. His death was possible because He was born a man. (See Hebrews 2:9.)

Paul writes (I Timothy 1:15), "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Can we miss the grace and mercy and love of God contained in this realization? It should be personal to each one of us as it was to Paul. No wonder the angels sang,

the shepherds rejoiced, the wise men traveled, and Simeon and Anna blessed God!

May our hearts, too, join in the rejoicing at the birth of the Saviour who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Precious Saviour, great Redeemer,
Thou hast blessed my heart today,
For I know that Thy salvation
Meets my needs in every way.

Precious Baby in the manger,
Though the world has missed Thy grace,
We rejoice at Thine appearing,
Saviour of our fallen race.

Heavy burdens Thou hast lifted
By thine all-sufficient blood;
Who but Thee could stem the rushing
Of our sorrow, death, sin's flood.

Men, rejoice with glad hosannas;
Prince of Peace has ended strife;
Controversy, war with Heaven,
Now gives way to holy life.

Grace of God: How can I measure
Jesus' sacrifice for me?
Celebration? Insufficient
To express from sin made free.

Heart's devotion; nothing smaller
Can display the thanks we owe.
Come then, bow to Christ the Saviour;
Glad thanks—adoration show.

Bow to Him, the great Creator,
Shepherd, Pilot, Husband, Friend;
See in Him God's grace and pardon
Of our fears and strifes—the end.

—L.C.

HONESTY

Honesty is so important; being honest with everything God has spoken. For it is written "...Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4) There are hundreds of denominations all claiming to be the body of Christ on earth, and yet many are totally different in faith and practice. It seems each one has its pet doctrines. May we love our God with all our hearts as it is commanded (Matt. 22:36-37), which is the greatest of all commands. If we will love Him with the whole heart we cannot fail for He will come in and dwell within us, and have fellowship and communion with us, and guide us into all truth. But when man picks out just a part of God's word, that he wants or that pleases him, and doesn't take the whole of it, he is not loving God with the whole heart. We will be responsible if we tamper with the word of God. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (Rev. 22:18,19)

It's so easy to get off balance, to go to one extreme or another. I believe many times when there are differences of understanding, when there is friction between people, or groups of believers, neither side is completely right. One side sees a point, they just know isn't right about the other, and the other side sees a point they just know isn't right about their opponent. If we would sit down together in love and humility, and reason together with a burning love for the truth, and for each other, what progress could be made in God's Holy will! It is His truth; it is His church. The Holy Spirit's power is lost in churches and people because of pride, because of a lack of love for the truth. (in reality a love for the Lord.) Lord, help us to be honest!

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

"And the second commandment is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matt. 22:39) This is a big order, and not the example we see in carnal man, where he pushes and shoves and tears down to be on top; where "me, mine, and self" has to be first. What an extreme opposite of the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself, who loved us while we were yet sinners. Talk about upholding truth, if there's any one great truth in the Bible, it's love. But true love cares about another just like we care about ourselves. If we will be totally honest with this command, how lovely we will get along together! How we need each other! How we need correction, if we are in error! Also, if we love our neighbor as ourselves, we will be concerned about our neighbor's salvation as our own. Is there a work to do? Yes, I believe there's more to be done than we can begin to do. Men are departing this life all around us without salvation.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again... Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation... Now then we are ambassadors for Christ..." (II Cor. 5:14-20)

Yes, we should be strangers and pilgrims on earth, with our citizenship in heaven. There is a message to be given: that Jesus died and rose again to redeem man, to set men free. If we don't give it out, who is supposed to? We are not to live unto ourselves, but unto Him who loved us. We are to be laying up treasures in heaven, not on earth. Our pleasure should be to do God's Holy will. Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6:24) Jesus also said that the cares of

(Continued on page 11)

ARTICLES

A Call to Thought Purity -Harold S. Martin (sel. by Herman Royer)	Aug/Sep & Oct
Am I Worthy? -W. M. Gass (sel. by Susie Sell)	Feb
And the Fire Shall Try... -Everett Oyler	Apr/May
Behold What Manner of Love! -Lloyd Wagner	Oct
Breath of Life -Elma Moss	Apr/May
But Whoso Harkeneth Unto Me... -Everett Oyler	Feb
Christ our Law -R. Brinsmead (sel. by Kenneth Garber)	Jun & Jul
Contentment (sel. by Bertie Baker)	Nov
Dear Readers -Wade Flora	Nov
Dear Young People -Everett and Nancy Oyler	Mar
Faith -Kenneth Garber	Jan
Faith -H. Bonar (sel. by Susie Coning)	Oct
For a Man's Life Consisteth Not... -Everett Oyler	Jul
Freedom in Christ -James Beery	Oct
Friendship -L.C.	Aug/Sep
God's Deliverance -L.C.	Oct
God's Grace -Kenneth Martin	Jan
God's Mercy and Grace -L.C.	Dec
God's Representatives -L.C.	Feb
Honesty -Kenneth Garber	Dec
Hope of The Church -Lloyd Wagner	Apr/May
I Will Give Them an Everlasting Name -Ron Cable	Feb
New Life in Christ -Mary E. Lavy	Aug/Sep
Old or Gold? -Linda Frick	Mar
Report of Brazil -Hollis Flora	Jun
Some Thoughts on Loving our Brother -Tim Royer	Jul
Suffering Christ -L.C.	Mar
Summer Amusements -E. Wine	Jul
Thanksgiving and Devotion -L.C.	Nov
The Future -L.C.	Jan
The Golden Years (sel. by Susie Coning)	Feb
Today's Christian Battlefields -L.C.	Jun
United Against Sin -L.C.	Jul
Witnesses With Power of the Spirit -L.C.	Apr/May
Who Shall Ascend unto the Hill of the Lord...? -Everett Oyler	Nov

POEMS

An Evening Prayer -Susan Harper	Apr/May
Be Kind -Linda Wagner	Mar
Calvary and Its Consequences -J. F. Dorsey (sel. by Susie Sell)	Apr/May
Day by Day -Lina Sandell	Jan
Emblems of Christ (sel. by Emmanuel and Catherine Garber)	Jun
Glogotha Hill—Calvary Hill -Hollis Flora	Mar
He Lives! He Reigns! -Katie V. Hall (sel. by Susie Sell)	Mar
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord. -John Wesley	Feb
Holy Spirit, Come -Mrs. C. H. Morris	Apr/May
I Shall Live on in the Lives of My Children -G. N. Crowell (sel. by Joe & Elizabeth Royer)	Oct
Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me -Paul Gerhardt	Aug/Sep
Lost, but Won (sel. by Susie Wagner)	Jun
Miracles Multiplied -Stanley Brubaker	Jul
On the Cross -Anonymous	Mar
One Step More (sel. by Bertie Baker)	Jun
Perfect Trust (sel. by Susie Wagner)	Oct
Precious Gift -Susan Harper	Jul
Side By Side - Susan Harper	Jan
Thanksgiving -J. I. Cover	Nov
The Star of Bethlehem -J. I. Cover	Dec
Thou Great First Cause (sel by Bertie Baker)	Oct
Where Did She Go? -Susan Harper	Nov
Which? (sel. by Everett Oyler)	Jun

MEDITATIONS by Ernest Wagner

Death; Communication; Knowledge & Responsibility	Jan
Forced Service or Free Gift	Feb
Faith; Love; Mercy vs. Judgment	Mar
The Spirit	Apr/Mar
Our Tongues	Jun
Our Brains	Jul
From Dark to Glory	Aug/Sep
The Resurrection	Oct

Harvest Time; Blessings; Thank the Lord	Nov
First Love	Dec

HISTORICAL

History of the Bible	James -L.C.	Jan
" " " "	I & II Peter -L.C.	Feb
" " " "	Epistles of John -L.C.	Mar
" " " "	Jude (Schaff-Herzog-Halley)	Apr/May
" " " "	Revelation -L.C.	Jun
Summary of the Inquisition	-L.C.	Jul
He Died at His Post (poem)	<u>from Some Who Led</u>	Aug/Sep
Daniel Miller's Dwelling House,	Life of John Kline	Oct
Selection from Life of John Kline,	1842	Nov
Selection from Life of John Kline,	1844	Dec

CHILDREN'S PAGE by Stanley Brubaker

Forever	Jan
Doing the Chores	Feb
Vigilance	Mar
Sonar for Success	Apr/May
Only a Shell	Jun
Miracles Multiplied	Jul
Order and Organization	Aug/Sep
"Why Can't I Be...?"	Oct
Discerning the Times	Nov
An Appetite for Affection	Dec

FOR YOUTH

Carefulness -L.C.	Jan
Youth Today—Church Tomorrow -Miriam Coning	Feb
Juliitta -Roger Berry	Apr/May
Which? (poem) Sel. by Everett Oyler	Jun
The Power of God -Ina Cover	Jul
The Vows We Made -Miriam Coning	Aug/Sep
What Did You Purpose? -Daisy Sue King	
Sel. by Nancy Oyler	Oct
Encouragment in Singing -Rosanna Cover	Nov

BAPTISMS

Aaron Beery	Jan. 12
Stephen Beery	Nov. 24, 1985
Elizabeth Cardosa dos Santos	Feb. 16
Edward Flora	Jan. 19
Kevin Garber	Apr. 6
Geralda Gonçalves	Jan. 5
Denita Huffman	Dec. 1, 1985
Elizabeth Martin	Dec. 7
Gayle Miller	Nov. 23
Beth Ann Oyler	Aug. 31
Linda Wagner	May 20

BIRTHS

Alexander Lee Bowman	Jul. 12
Abraham Lee Bowser	Aug. 19
Willus Leon Cable	Aug. 6
Charlesta Annette Hilty	Nov. 30
Jonathan Eugene Miller	Dec. 4
Adrian Scott Royer	Jul. 18
Craig Allen Royer	Apr. 14
Honra Leanne Royer	May 21
Jewel Rebekah Royer	Jan. 15
Laura Rose Royer	Mar. 27
Jared Elijah Walker	Feb. 9

OBITUARIES

Dora Royer	Jun
Nathan Royer	Aug/Sep

Our sincere thanks go to all our readers and faithful helpers and supporters of the Pilgrim. We especially thank Ina Cover for typing the stencils and Elma Moss for supplying mailing labels.

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this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and we become unfruitful. (Matt. 13:22)

MATERIALISM

We are living in a very materialistic world, but only what's done for Christ will last. This world is going to burn up. How foolish to get so involved that there's no time for spiritual things! I believe materialism is a threat to Christianity. A common statement is, "I can hardly make ends meet." But who made our ends? I firmly believe it's wise to stay uninvolved as much as possible. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." (II Tim. 2:4) Jesus became poor for our sakes. Apostle Paul said, "...As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (II Cor. 6:10) (The true riches) Jesus said, "Again the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he hath found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." (Matt. 13:44-46) Brethren, this sounds like giving our all to the Lord and His kingdom.

I would like to bring out a small portion of thoughts from Antidotes for Apostasy by William McGrath:

"Because of persecution the church flees to remote frontiers to live unto itself. It then forgets its mission to go to the lost, and drifts into a more formal and outward religion. Having forgotten the original spirit and mission of the Church, they concentrate on making money more than on making converts, and as wealth accumulates, the members judge one another on their ability to make money, rather than their Christ-likeness. With the increase of wealth comes the increase of luxuries, and the desire to be thought of better status by the world."

By these few thoughts we can see how the Church has drifted. It's easy and takes no effort for a boat to

drift downstream, but it takes effort and diligence to go upstream against the current.

Here's another thought that's worthy of consideration. Jesus Christ and the early church are our example, our pattern. If we do not stay with the original pattern and follow it, we will drift. It's like making many pieces of wood you want exactly alike. If you make one from a pattern, and then instead of using the original pattern, use the one you made, and keep patterning off the one you have previously made, after awhile, what you are making will be very different from the original. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3)

Lord, help us to be faithful!

—Continued next issue

Kenneth Garber

Twain Harte, California

MEDITATION: FIRST LOVE

In Revelation Jesus faulted some because they had left their first love, and He told others to remember how they had heard and received, and to repent and do their first works. When we were convicted by our consciences and found relief in baptism, we loved Jesus for His love to us in providing a way for us to be forgiven. Following this, there seems to be a danger of settling into a complacent or lukewarm condition, and it is necessary for some severe trial to wake us up and remind us how dependent we are on Jesus. When James and John asked a favor of Jesus, He reminded them of another baptism that He and they needed to have to reach perfection. Peter thought he was ready to go with Jesus; but was told he needed to be converted. So we must know as long as we are in these mortal bodies, our trials are not all over yet.

—Ernest Wagner

Modesto, California

HISTORICAL

LIFE AND LABORS OF ELDER JOHN KLINE, 1844

Wednesday, December 25. Christmas day. Meeting in Keagey's schoolhouse. Matthew 2 was read. Brother Daniel Miller spoke beautifully in the German language on the advent of the Lord Jesus. His main subject was the love of the Father, the good will toward men that gave the only begotten Son to redeem and save them.

He said: "The day is unimportant. We may have Christ's birthday correct, or we may not. I am not historian enough to speak positively on this point. But one thing there is upon which I can speak positively; and all the enemies of Jesus are unable to wrest the conviction of that truth from my heart; and that thing is this, that 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.' It has pleased our heavenly Father to tell us about our Savior's birth; how lowly it was, in a stable; and that He was laid in a manger, which means a kind of box from which horses take their food; and that a star in the east, sometimes called the Star of Bethlehem, guided the wise men who came from the east to see the infant Jesus, to the place where He lay. Those good men hardly knew that this beautiful star was but an emblem of the leadings of God's revealed Truth. But it is so; for all the light of prophecy centered in that star which showed the time and place of the birth of the Son of God. Some seem to think the star was only a natural light, such as natural eyes could see, but I do not think so. I rather think it was a heavenly light, and that it could be seen only by such as loved the hope of our Lord's coming and were ready to rejoice at His birth.

"We have the brighter light of His more clearly revealed Word, by which we are enabled to find, not an infant Savior grown up to perfect manhood made perfect through sufferings ending in His death upon the cross.

We find Him as the risen and glorified Lord with power to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. His heavenly truth is to us now and to all who are willing to open their eyes and see, as the Sun of Righteousness; 'For we are not of the night, nor of darkness, but we are all the children of light and the children of the day.' Paul here means such as are true Christians. I love to preach the Gospel; but I love still more to see men and women open their eyes to the light of its truth, and their hearts to the warmth of its love. In this way they are led to seek the Lord; and the promise is, 'Every one that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.'

"One more thing I must notice. These wise men brought gifts to the infant Jesus. I suppose these were the first Christmas gifts ever made; and the custom of making presents at this time has probably been kept up ever since. If presents are made on this day with an eye to the gift of God's love, they will be acceptable in His eye; but if made lightly, simply to comply with custom or fashion, they have no promise."

I must yet add this from the brother's beautiful discourse. He said, "The greatest of all the Christmas gifts that man ever has received, or that even God Himself can bestow, was made on that first Christmas day. Some of you may not think as I do about it, but on that day God gave to the world His own and only beloved Son, and to my eyes, and I hope to the eyes of many of you, He is the fairest of all the fair, and the one altogether lovely. I lay all the gold, and the frankincense, and the myrrh of my heart's best affections as thank offerings at His feet on this Christmas day. Brethren, God has made His most costly gift to us in the person of His Son; should we not be willing to reciprocate this gift with the most precious gift we are able to offer? And what is the most precious thing in His sight that we can give? It is our love in return for His love to us. If we do make this return in fullness we place ourselves in a state of highest blessedness, described by John in few words: 'We love him because

he first loved us.' This is a heavenly state, and it must be the basis of all the bliss of saints and angels."

I wish I had time to give more than this mere outline of the brother's excellent discourse in the German language, but I must leave off. We have night meeting at Koontz's where Brother Daniel Miller and I stay all night.

From Life and Labors of Elder John Kline

by Benjamin Funk

(pp. 177-179)

BAPTISMS

We of the Salida Congregation rejoiced much when another precious soul, Gayle Miller, was received into our fellowship November 23 by a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ and holy baptism. May God lead her and help her to be faithful all her days.

—Joseph L. Cover

We of the Goshen Congregation were made to rejoice when another precious soul, Elizabeth Martin, was received into our fellowship on December 7 by a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ and water baptism. May she be faithful in serving our Master.

—Melvin Coning

COMMUNION MEETING NOTICE

The members of the Old Brethren Church in Brazil have agreed to hold a Lovefeast Meeting in the meeting house in Rio Verde on February 22, 1987, the Lord willing. Any visitors who could make the long trip from the North would be made most welcome. May God bless this meeting for His glory and the strengthening of His people.

—Joseph L. Cover

BIRTHS

HILTY - A daughter, Charlesta Annette, born November 30 to Mervin and Gloria Hilty of New Madison, Ohio.

MILLER - A son, Jonathan Eugene, born December 4 to Bill and Marilyn Miller of Salida, California.

CORRECTION: Spelling for Ronald Cable's Willus Leon.

AN APPETITE FOR AFFECTION

Anyone who has a new puppy knows how hungry it is for affection. And why shouldn't it be? It has been taken away from its brothers, its sisters, and its mother to a different house—a house with strange people, strange smells, and strange sounds.

In its newfound fear and loneliness, the puppy does not like to be left alone; it whimpers and whines and wails as if its heart were breaking. It scratches at its box, shuffling around in despair as if it were left there to die. But then...the noise of a door opening! And, there—there is its new friend, the boy who bought it, with puppy food and milk and lots of love and boyish energy! Look at that pup now! Is this the same creature that whined in misery only a moment ago? See how it jumps and begs and spins its puppy tail in fantastic frenzies of excitement. Its every action is shouting "Pick me up! pick me up! Hold me, feed me, cuddle me, love me! Why are you so terribly slow? Pick me up quickly! My friend! My friend!"

When a little pup shows us his great hunger for attention, he is just doing what God created him to do. Many other animals, including most mammals, show an appetite for affection which can only be satisfied by a loving, caring, serving response from a trusted friend. If dumb animals—creatures without wisdom or soul—need such affection, how much more do we. God has made us so that we both need and can give to others an unselfish affection, a heartfelt compassion, a free forgiveness, a tender pity. May we share God's great and precious love unselfishly with others.

—Stanley K. Brubaker

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